

THE



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My face was stolen for a dating site

INSIDE TIMES2



Andrew Neil to join Times Radio

News page 2

Britain's day of shame over tainted NHS blood

Calls for charges in scandal that cost 3,000 lives

Kaya Burgess Science Reporter
Eleanor Hayward Health Editor
Lara Wildenberg

Corporate manslaughter charges against Whitehall departments have been called for after the prime minister apologised to victims of the infected blood scandal on "a day of shame for the British state".

Rishi Sunak said that he was "truly sorry" and pledged uncapped compensation to victims and families. "Whatever it costs to deliver this scheme, we will pay it," he promised. An announcement is due today on a package of payouts that could top £10 billion.

His remarks came after a report yesterday laid bare decades of a "chilling cover-up" by the NHS and governments in a "horrific" scandal that has so far claimed 3,000 lives, including those of 380 children, and infected about 30,000 people through blood transfusions and haemophilia drugs contaminated with HIV and hepatitis C in the 1970s and 1980s. It has been labelled the worst technical disaster in NHS history.

Doctors, health officials, the NHS, civil servants and government ministers are all accused of failing to put patient safety first over half a century of "systemic, collective and individual failures".

Victims said that they felt "validated and vindicated" by the report. Clive Smith, from the Haemophilia Society, said of the scandal and the cover-up: "We've known for decades, and now the country and the world knows."

Sunak told the Commons that the

report should "shake our nation to its core" as it revealed the "decades-long moral failure of the state".

He said: "The people and institutions in which we place our trust failed in the most harrowing and devastating way ... This is an apology from the state to every single person impacted by this scandal ... It should never have been this way. On behalf of this and every government stretching back to the 1970s, I am truly sorry."

He added: "This should have been avoided. It was known these treatments were contaminated ... People in positions of power had the chance to stop the transmission of those infections. Time and again they failed to do so."

Amanda Pritchard, the chief executive of NHS England, offered her "deepest and heartfelt apologies for the role the NHS played in the suffering and the loss" and said tens of thousands of people had been badly let down.

Speaking at a Sunday Times campaign event, Andy Burnham, the former Labour health secretary and now the mayor of Greater Manchester, said the report showed there had been "a criminal cover-up on an industrial scale ... There must be accountability. And there must now be full consideration of prosecutions, and I would include in that the potential for corporate manslaughter charges against Whitehall departments." The Crown Prosecution Service said it would have to wait for police to recommend charges before it could take any action.

Dame Diana Johnson, the Labour

Continued on page 2



Showtime A Chelsea pensioner with the influencer Zanne Lee at the Chelsea Flower Show, where the King and Queen visited a garden designed by children and Dame Judi Dench planted a seedling from the felled Sycamore Gap tree. Page 3

Netanyahu hits back at war crime claims

Gabrielle Weiniger Tel Aviv
Hugh Tomlinson Washington

Binyamin Netanyahu has described an attempt to seek an arrest warrant against him for alleged war crimes in Gaza as "absurd" and insisted that any attempt to tie Israel's hands was doomed to fail.

Israel's prime minister and defence minister, as well as senior leaders of Hamas, were all declared wanted for crimes against humanity by the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, triggering protests and claims of "false equivalence" from both sides.

The British barrister Karim Khan KC, chief prosecutor of the Hague court, accused Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant, the defence minister, of crimes including "starvation of civilians as a method of warfare", "wilful killing" and "intentionally directing attacks against a civilian population".

The Hamas leaders Yahya Sinwar, Mohammad Deif and Ismail Haniyeh should also be charged with mass murder, hostage-taking and rape during and since the October 7 attacks, which killed 1,200 people, he said.

More than 35,500 Palestinians have died since the war started, according to

the Hamas-run local authorities in Gaza and aid agencies, while most of the population — some 1.7 million people — are said to have become refugees.

In two video statements Netanyahu condemned "a moral outrage" that "will cast an everlasting mark of shame on the international court". In English, he accused Khan of antisemitism and "blood libels" and of "creating a twisted and false moral equivalence between the leaders of Israel and the henchmen of Hamas ... This is like creating a moral equivalence after September 11th between President Bush and Osama

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IN THE NEWS

Self-drive by 2026

Autonomous cars have been given approval to operate on British roads within two years, after a bill aimed at regulating the vehicles was passed into law. Page 8

Nursery killing

The family of a baby who died after being punished by a deputy manager at a nursery have said that they will "never forgive the callousness" of her actions. Page 15

Iran in mourning

The death of Iran's president was confirmed after a helicopter crash, provoking a mixed reaction and five days of mourning. Israel has denied any involvement. Page 26

Eating with pride

Young French social media influencers are trying to revive national pride by urging their followers to celebrate the nation's gastronomy, wines and cultural heritage. Page 29

Audit failures

Audit firms failed to raise the alarm for three quarters of big companies that have gone bust. Failures since 2010 include Thomas Cook, BHS and Carillion. Page 31



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News

Today's highlights

7am Mel Stride, the work and pensions secretary
7.15am The special adviser to the International Criminal Court, **Leila Sadat**
10.15am **How To Win An Election** Peter Mandelson, Polly Mackenzie and Daniel Finkelstein on how to pull off a political stunt
3.45pm The broadcaster **Jonathan Dimbleby**, right discusses his new book *Endgame: 1944*
5pm **Lord Walney** on political violence and disruption

TIMES RADIO
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TODAY'S EDITION

WORLD



ANIMAL TRAGIC

Ukraine's wildlife has also suffered from Putin's invasion

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SPORT



VAR AND AWAY

What does happen behind the scenes at Stockley Park

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SPEAKING OUT

Bringing the horror of Tiananmen Square to the stage

PAGE 9

419 days since Wall Street Journal reporter **Evan Gershkovich** was detained in Russia
#FreeEvan



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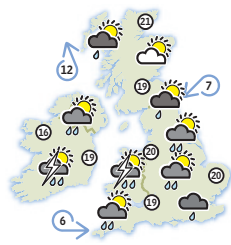
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THE WEATHER



Mostly dry in Scotland. Scattered heavy showers and thunderstorms elsewhere. **Full forecast, page 51**

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Andrew Neil adds his voice to Times Radio election coverage

Alex Farber Media Correspondent

Times Radio has signed up Andrew Neil as part of its coverage of the UK and US elections.

Neil, who is known for his incisive interviews with political leaders, is to present a "hard-hitting" daily news programme from September 9.

The show will be broadcast at 1pm Monday to Thursday and help to set the news agenda through interviews with prominent politicians and influential figures, supported by Neil's take on the day's political events.

Neil said that the show was launching at a seismic time for democracy. "Western liberal democracy has been tested more in these last years than in living memory," he said.

"As UK and US citizens prepare to go to the polls, in nations polarised and divided, set against a world riven with instability and contention, my show on Times Radio will look to define the signal from the noise."

Neil joins the station days after it

reported a record 4.4 million average weekly listening hours in the first quarter of this year, up by more than 25 per cent on the same period last year, according to figures supplied by the measurement body Rajar. More than 500,000 listeners tuned in for a record 8.8 hours per week.

He joins a roster of on-air talent that includes commentators such as Daniel Finkelstein and William Hague, with Aasmah Mir and Stig Abell, John Pienaar, Ed Vaizey and Ayesha Hazarika also presenting shows.

Tim Levell, programme director of Times Radio, said Neil was "indelibly associated" with elections in the minds of the UK public. "There is no one better to turn to for the authoritative take on both the UK and US elections," he said. "As Times Radio expands its coverage during the election period, having Andrew Neil at 1pm will make Times Radio the must-listen destination on the dial."

The chairman of the Spectator and a former BBC journalist, Neil most

recently hosted his own Channel 4 current affairs show.

As a prominent analyst of global political and economic affairs, he has edited The Sunday Times and was pivotal to the launch of Sky television and is considered to be one of the most experienced election-watchers on either side of the Atlantic.

Last month he told members of a cross-party Lords inquiry into the future of news in typically forthright style that the government should "stay the hell out of" trying to intervene in the news sector.

"You do not know anything about it. You are only trouble. We are not on your side; you are not on our side. We are different," he said.

"You cannot keep the streets safe at night. The Scottish government cannot build two bog-standard ferries. This parliament cannot build a single high-speed line, so stay out of news. We do not want any help. I just do not want you to interfere. I do not want your tax subsidies. I want you just to concentrate."

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'Day of shame'

MP who has been campaigning on behalf of victims for almost two decades, said there was "very clear indication of criminal behaviour" relating to children at Lord Mayor Treloar College in Hampshire. The inquiry found they were experimented on with infected blood without their knowledge. "That's something I think the police should be investigating," she said.

The inquiry report concluded that the scandal "was not an accident".

Margaret Thatcher told the public in 1989 that patients had received the "best treatment available", but this claim was wrong and unacceptable and defied logic, the inquiry said.

Thousands were "robbed of years of healthy life", but successive governments "wrongly described" infection as

"the unavoidable adverse effects of medical treatment".

In reality, there were "systemic, collective and individual failures to deal ethically, appropriately and quickly with the risk of infections being transmitted in blood", the report said. These risks had been well known for decades, but were "unjustifiably downplayed".

Sir Brian Langstaff, the former High Court judge who compiled the report, found a catalogue of failures, noting: "Each on its own is serious. Taken together they are a calamity ... The scale of what happened is horrifying." He wrote: "The answer to the question 'Was there a cover-up?' is that there has been. Not in the sense of a handful of people plotting in an orchestrated conspiracy to mislead, but in a way that was more subtle, more pervasive and more chilling in its implications."

Sunak's government is also criticised

for the delay in setting out its plans to compensate victims, who are still dying at a rate of one every four days.

Doctors and officials adopted an "attitude of denial towards the risks of treatment" because of a "doctor knows best" culture within the NHS while victims were "further betrayed" by being used in trials without their knowledge.

Langstaff said: "The infections happened because those in authority — doctors, the blood services and successive governments — did not put patient safety first ... Patients were knowingly exposed to unacceptable risks of infection. This is not a question of hindsight. The risks of blood and blood products causing severe infection were known well before most patients were treated."

Reports, pages 4-7
Compensation and restorative justice must be swift, leading article, page 25

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ICC prosecutor targets Netanyahu

Bin Laden." Addressing the prosecutor directly in Hebrew, he added: "With what audacity do you equate the monsters of Hamas to the soldiers of the IDF, the most moral army in the world?" He added: "Israeli citizens, I promise you one thing — the attempt to tie our hands will fail." He vowed again to overthrow Hamas and achieve "total victory".

Although Israel is not a member of the war crimes court, the Palestinian territories were admitted as a member state in 2015, and the court claims jurisdiction over both alleged Hamas atrocities in Israel and Israeli actions in the Gaza Strip.

The request for arrest warrants must be approved by a panel of ICC judges, but if confirmed it could mean Netanyahu and Gallant face being detained in any of 124 nations that are members of the court, including Britain.

However, a spokesman for Rishi Sunak said that the move was "not helpful" in moving towards a ceasefire in Gaza, nor "getting hostages out or getting humanitarian aid in".

President Biden called the application for arrest warrants against Israeli leaders "outrageous", while Republican politicians in Washington called for Khan and ICC officials to be "punished" with travel bans. Biden added: "Let me be clear: whatever this prosecutor might imply, there is no equivalence, none, between Israel and Hamas. We

Who are the British members of the ICC's panel?

Sir Adrian Fulford
 Appointed a High Court judge in 2002, he served on the International Criminal Court from 2003 to 2012, delivering its first guilty verdict.

Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws
 President of the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute, the KC was recently appointed

by the King to the Order of the Thistle, Scotland's most celebrated order of chivalry.

Amal Clooney
 The barrister is renowned for her work in human rights and international law.

Danny Friedman
 His career spans almost three decades and the KC has been involved in major inquiries in

England and Northern Ireland on policing and institutional child abuse.

Elizabeth Wilmshurst
 The KC was pivotal in negotiating the Rome Statute of the ICC, which established four core crimes — genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and the crime of aggression — all exempt from any statute of limitations.

will always stand with Israel against threats to its security."

The US State Department claimed Khan's move would embolden Hamas.

"We did not believe the ICC had jurisdiction over either of the parties in this case," Matthew Miller, a spokesman, said. He added that Israeli internal investigations into the conduct of the war should be allowed to play out and that Hamas "should be held accountable on the battlefield, and if not on the battlefield in a court of law".

Hamas reacted angrily, claiming that the ICC's decision "equates the victim with the executioner". It said that the court's move would act as an encouragement for Israel to continue "its war of extermination".

Khan, whose announcement was welcomed by human rights groups and states including Belgium and Austria, said he had acted after "an independent and impartial investigation" and on the advice of "a panel of experts in international law". He added that his team had confidence in the prospect of conviction, having "authenticated videos and photographs".

"This is not a witch-hunt," he said in an interview with CNN.

"It's a forensic process that is expected of us as international prosecutors, as an independent court, to build evidence that is solid."

Wickedly perverse move should sink the ICC, Melanie Phillips, page 22
Israel outraged, page 26

Sunshine, stars and a Camilla screen secret as Chelsea returns

Kate Mansey, Adam Vaughan

The King and Queen were awarded new titles last night in honour of their environmental work: the “King of the Compost” and “Queen of the Bees”.

They were clearly amused when presented with their new names on badges by schoolchildren at the RHS Flower Show.

The royal couple were visiting the RHS No Adults Allowed Garden, designed by Harry Holding and children from Sullivan Primary School in London. “Oh, thank you very much,” Charles said. Looking at the name on the badge, he made him laugh: “Oh ha ha. Quite right!”

To enter the garden Charles and Camilla had to pay a forfeit — handing over a posey of flowers beginning with the first letter of their names. They chose camellias from the Buckingham Palace gardens for Charles and Camilla.

Charles said he liked the idea of the water feature in the garden designed by children. “Are you trying to grow vegetables?” he asked. “There’s nothing more fun than eating something you have grown. You should try it.”

His Majesty appeared in good spirits as he continued his summer schedule of events. He arrived in a smaller royal party than recent years, accompanied by the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester and Prince and Princess Michael of Kent. There was also a small group of friends and relatives including Camilla’s daughter, Laura Lopes, and her husband, Harry, her sister, Annabel Elliot and the Marquess and Marchioness of Cholmondeley.

Camilla went on a separate tour from that of her husband. She visited the Sue Ryder garden and looked at the Bees for Development stand, an organisation of which she is president, saying: “I have bees of my own.”

In the Bridgerton garden she saw a stone bench that popped open to reveal a hidden drawer containing diaries and documents. “Oh my goodness me, how very exciting,” she said. “It’s very peace-

ful with the water. The freesias are out and looking beautiful.”

The Queen revealed that she had watched the TV drama *Bridgerton*. “I watched the first lot,” she said of the programme, which was described by the Hollywood Reporter as a “sex positive bodice-ripper”.

The *Bridgerton*-inspired garden, designed by Holly Johnston as a “secretive and secluded space”, was based on the character Penelope Featherington, played by Nicola Coughlan and sponsored by Netflix, the streaming service which also broadcast the Duke and Duchess of Sussex’s documentary about their departure from royal duties.

The King and Queen’s visit to the Chelsea Flower Show came after it was announced last week that the King had become patron of the Royal Horticultural Society. He succeeds his mother, who was patron of the RHS for 70 years and visited the annual flower show nearly every year of her reign. The late Queen Elizabeth’s last appearance was to view the Platinum Jubilee floral displays created in her honour.

Also in attendance was the actress Dame Judi Dench, who planted a seedling from the felled Sycamore Gap tree in the National Trust’s Octavia Hill garden. It is the first time the public will be able to view one of the seedlings



Dame Judi Dench planted a seedling from the felled Sycamore Gap tree at the National Trust’s Octavia Hill garden and the King visited the No Adults Allowed garden, designed by children



grown from seeds and branches collected from the iconic tree, before they return to a secret high security greenhouse in Devon.

She named the seedling Antoninus after the Roman emperor Antoninus Pius, the son of Hadrian, in a nod to the wall that the tree had stood next to for more than a century.

Following England’s sixth wettest

winter on record and with warnings of warmer winters to come because of climate change, the question of how to deal with water was seemingly a big preoccupation for gardeners and visitors at this year’s show.

“I have to say the management of water is probably the theme of the year,” said Chris Moncrieff, head of horticultural information at the RHS. “People have done water storage before, but we’re seeing attenuation here. On sustainability, people are seeing water as the most critical.”

Water, and how to control it, features in Matthew Childs’s quarry-inspired garden for the Terrence Higgins Trust, along with Dr Ed Barsley’s flood-resilient garden for the insurance scheme Flood Re and Tom Massey’s “sponge” garden for the charity WaterAid.

“We’ve got so many impermeable surfaces, concrete jungles, we’re seeing them everywhere. When it rains, roads become rivers, the water rushes off so quickly,” said Barsley, who is urging gardeners to treat rainwater as their own, slowing it down and storing it in their gardens.

Which one do you want to live in?

Review

The question on everybody’s lips at Chelsea is always “Which garden did you like best?” to which I always must reply, one of the ones I want to live in (Stephen Anderton writes).

For isn’t that what a garden is — a place, more than a set of sponsor’s messages? This year’s show had some genuine stopping places as well as some absolute walk-on-by horrors.

Tom Stuart-Smith’s infinitely comfortable white garden nestled under huge multi-stemmed hazels, for the National Garden Scheme, will surely get the popular vote and is a deeply enclosed haven. Ula Maria’s garden for Muscular Dystrophy UK was almost as polished but pleasantly airier. Both were economical with the variety of materials used. I don’t think I’ve seen a Chelsea where so many gardens used so many materials so randomly. Sometimes less is more. And a person can only enjoy so much rusted steel.

Some of the most appealing were Balcony and Container Gardens, unfortunately bigger in area than would be most instructive (RHS, please note for another year) but they outshone many a garden with 50 times the budget. Tom Bannister’s Ecotherapy Garden, a terraced courtyard of superlight concrete with plunge pool and ferny cascade, was excellent. You could feel people’s fascination to be. It was where people wanted to be.

So was the Addleshaw Goddard Junglette Garden, a balcony dripping with nasturtiums outside and an oasis of tree ferns and greenery inside. Clever recycled corrugated paper formed the back wall.

In the Great Marquee the pickings get leaner as the cost of exhibiting drives away nurserymen. There were few bulbs compared with past years, or even roses or clematis, though the perennials were splendid. It was wonderful to see the vast display of proteas on the Cape Flora SA stand.

Cohen admits \$30,000 theft from Trump over rigged TV poll

Will Pavia New York

The star witness at the trial of Donald Trump admitted stealing \$30,000 from the Trump Organisation as he testified for a fourth day against the former president.

Michael Cohen, 57, who was once Trump’s lawyer, acknowledged the theft as his former boss sat about ten yards from him in court.

“Have you ever paid back the Trump Organisation the money that you stole from them?” Trump’s lawyer, Todd Blanche, asked.

“No, sir,” Cohen replied.

Cohen had been testifying about a deal at the heart of the case. Prosecutors say he paid the porn actress Stormy Daniels \$130,000 at Trump’s direction, to stop her from speaking publicly

about an affair in the weeks before the 2016 presidential election. They have charged Trump with falsifying business records to disguise payments made to reimburse Cohen as legal fees. Trump denies the charges.

Cohen said that at a meeting with the Trump Organisation’s chief financial officer, Allen Weisselberg, to arrange his reimbursement, he also asked to be repaid \$50,000. This related to the bill from Red Finch, a tech company he had engaged to rig an online poll being conducted by a television network, to determine “the most famous businessman of the last century”, he said.

Trump was near the bottom of the list. “It upset him,” Cohen said. Red Finch’s chief executive assured him that Trump could be boosted up the chart with the purchase of IP addresses and

the creation of an algorithm. “Initially, [Trump] wanted to be number one,” Cohen said. “But I didn’t think that would be a good idea because, of course, it would raise red flags.”

Cohen said the poll-rigging raised Trump to nine in the chart but his boss was unwilling to pay because the TV network then discontinued the poll. He said he eventually withdrew \$20,000 in cash from his personal bank account and gave it to the tech executive in a paper bag. But he later told Weisselberg that he was still owed \$50,000.

“Did you ever plead guilty to larceny?” Blanche asked.

“No, sir,” Cohen replied.

Cohen also told the court that he was considering running for Congress, arguing that his name recognition would give him a strong chance of

winning. There is nothing under US law that prohibits someone with a criminal conviction from running for Congress, or the presidency.

Blanche asked Cohen if he had “a financial interest in the outcome of this case”.

“Yes, sir,” Cohen replied, explaining that he talked about the case on his podcasts. But he would not benefit financially from Trump’s conviction, he added. “It’s better if he’s not for me because it gives me more to talk about in the future,” he said.

Cohen, who served more than a year in jail for crimes including campaign finance offences related to the Stormy Daniels payments, said he blamed Trump for what had happened to him.

Blanche, quoting from one of his podcasts, said “revenge against Presi-

dent Trump is a dish that’s ...” “Best served cold,” Cohen said, interrupting. “You meant it when you said it just now?” Blanche asked.

“Yes, sir,” said Cohen, nodding.

The defence later called Robert Costello, a lawyer and longtime associate of Rudy Giuliani, the former New York mayor and Trump legal representative, to the stand. Costello told the court he first met Cohen at a Manhattan hotel on April 17, 2016, about a week after the FBI raided Cohen’s home and office.

However, he angered Judge Juan Merchan after several verbal outbursts and reactions.

“You don’t give me a side-eye and you don’t roll your eyes,” the judge told him. “... If you don’t like my ruling, you don’t say ‘jeez.’”

The trial continues.

News Infected blood scandal

'A calamity that could and

The inquiry chief says hundreds of patients have yet to learn they are infected, reports Eleanor Hayward

Ministers "compounded the agony" of tens of thousands of infected blood victims by keeping the truth hidden for decades, the Infected Blood Inquiry chairman concluded.

Sir Brian Langstaff criticised a "litany of failures" by successive governments and continuing "sluggish" delays in providing compensation. More than 30,000 people were infected with contaminated blood on the NHS between 1970 and 1998 — a "calamity" that "could and should" have been avoided.

Speaking after his report was published yesterday, Langstaff said that the disaster was continuing to unfold, with victims dying each week from HIV or hepatitis. His 2,527-page report highlights a culture of defensiveness, delay and cover-up at the heart of the British state, a theme familiar from other modern scandals, including Hillsborough, the Post Office and NHS maternity care catastrophes.

Here are 11 key findings:

CHILLING COVER-UP

Victims had their trauma "compounded" by successive governments "more concerned about reputational damage than openness and honesty". Langstaff concluded: "Standing back, and viewing the response of the NHS and of government overall, the answer to the question 'Was there a cover up?' is that there has been. Not in the sense of a handful of people plotting in an orchestrated conspiracy to mislead, but in a way that was more subtle, more pervasive and more chilling in its implications." The report criticises the NHS for engaging in a "defensive closing of ranks" rather than undertaking investigations or apologising to the thousands of patients infected.

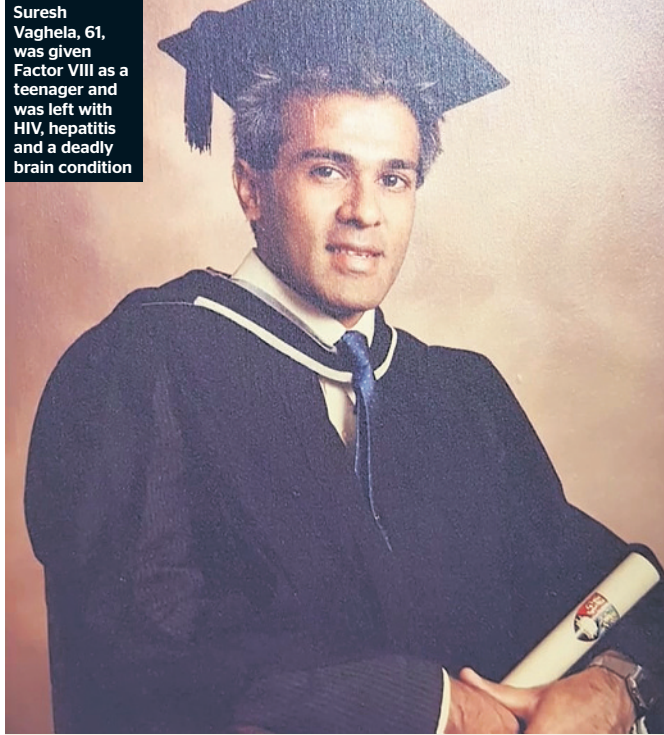
'NOT AN ACCIDENT'

Ministers, doctors and health officials maintained for decades that the 3,000 deaths and thousands of infections with HIV and hepatitis C were "unavoidable adverse effects" from treatment with haemophilia drugs and blood transfusions. They were wrong. Langstaff said the disaster was "not an accident", but rather was the result of "systemic, collective and individual failures" to deal with the risk of infected blood. The risks of deadly viruses being transmitted in blood had been known since the end of the Second World War. Despite this, NHS doctors treated patients with increasing volumes of blood-clotting drugs, while transfusions were used unnecessarily, for example, to "top up" women after childbirth so they could get "up and about" caring for the baby.

DESTRUCTION OF DOCUMENTS

Three crucial sets of documents which paint the government in a bad light were lost or destroyed in the 1980s and 1990s. The report said this was "a deliberate attempt to make the truth more difficult to reveal". Files that were destroyed include those detailing delays in the introduction of screening blood for hepatitis C. "The destruction was not an accident, nor the result of flood, fire or vermin," Langstaff wrote. "The immediate reason for destruction was human choice. Someone, for some reason, had chosen to have those documents destroyed." Individual patients

Suresh Vaghela, 61, was given Factor VIII as a teenager and was left with HIV, hepatitis and a deadly brain condition



Colin Smith, who contracted HIV via Factor VIII, was seven when he died in 1990



also had their medical records lost or destroyed, making it impossible for them to seek help, or understand how and when they were infected.

DOCTOR-KNOWS-BEST ATTITUDE

A pervasive "culture of paternalism" meant NHS doctors hid the risks of infected blood from their patients, and experimented on patients without their knowledge or consent. This was "unethical and wrong". In some cases, doctors lied and deceived patients about the risks of getting HIV from transfusions. Doctors tested patients for HIV and hepatitis without their consent, sometimes hiding the results

from them for years, by which time the damage had been done. This denied patients the opportunity to have treatment, or to prevent it spreading to loved ones.

CHILDREN USED FOR RESEARCH

An entire volume of the report is dedicated to the tragedy that unfolded at Lord Mayor Treloar College, a Hampshire school that had a haemophilia clinic on site. Of the 122 patients with haemophilia who attended the school between 1970 and 1987, only 30 survive. Children were used as a "unique" experimental opportunity, with infected blood products "indiscriminately"

Gary Rushby, a haemophiliac, unknowingly passed HIV to his pregnant wife, Lesley. They died within a year of each other. Abbey, below right, died at four months old



Margaret, Derek and John-Paul Martindale. Derek, a haemophiliac, contracted HIV aged 23 and was given a year to live. He is now 60



tested on them, without the children or their parents being informed. Langstaff said: "The pupils were often regarded as objects for research, rather than first and foremost as children." One harrowing passage of the report details how the schoolchildren were told they had HIV: "The staff went around the room saying 'yes, no, yes, no' to indicate whether they were HIV positive," it said, with the children then sent back to class.

SLOW RESPONSE TO AIDS

By mid-1982 it was clear that HIV could be transmitted through blood products, yet the government failed to act. Langstaff said: "There was already a growing

epidemic in the US likely to come to these shores. Yet the response was one of denial, disbelief, dismissiveness and delay. The government's response was unconscionably slow." In 1983, ministers stuck to the "misleading" line "there is no conclusive proof" HIV could be transmitted through blood products.

RELIANCE ON 'SKID-ROW' BLOOD

The UK relied on blood products imported from the US, where high-risk users were paid to donate, with one product sourced "100 per cent from skid-row derelicts". In May 1983, as the risk from Aids became clear, experts told the department of health that all im-

should have been avoided'



Lee Turton died aged ten after contracting HIV when he was four



How haemophilia treatment turned into a death sentence

Colin Smith, 7, asked for a bicycle for Christmas in 1989. His parents bought it for him even though they knew he would never ride or even sit on it. In January 1990 he died of Aids and hepatitis C.

Colin, the youngest of four brothers, had haemophilia diagnosed at four months old and was given Factor VIII, a blood-clotting treatment, at 12 months. He is one of more than 3,000 people estimated to have died because of infected blood products between 1970 and 2019, many of them young boys with haemophilia.

The Infected Blood Inquiry report, a 2,527-page document published yesterday, might have officially concluded a six-year public inquiry, but it was also the culmination of decades of campaigning by thousands of victims who have lost their health or children, partners, parents, siblings and friends.

The words "not treated" were written on his clinical notes, soon before Professor Arthur Bloom started his treatment of FVIII.

Bloom, a leading haemophilia specialist in the 1980s, was referenced multiple times in the report, which said he knew of FVIII's risks when he recommended and carried out treatment.

"Colin was unlucky enough to be born at the right time. Newly diagnosed haemophiliac, never been treated," his father, also Colin Smith, told Sky News. "Which is what we were after because as documentation states they are cheaper than chimpanzees. You treat a chimp once, you can follow the children throughout their lives. That's what was going on."

The Smiths received a letter three years after Colin's death informing them that he had also been infected with hepatitis C and they should get tested. They were not aware Colin had even been tested for the disease.

During Colin's life, the Smiths were shunned and endured abusive phone calls. People scratched crosses into their front door and painted "AIDS DEAD" on the side wall. His three older brothers were bullied at school and Mr Smith became unemployed over people's fear of his association with Aids.

"When you've got four boys your heart is in four pieces," Mrs Smith told the inquiry. "So when you lose one of your children, you lose a part of your heart."

Lee Turton died at the age of ten from Aids in 1992. He had been diagnosed with haemophilia as a six-month-old baby and treated with FVIII. When he was four, his parents were called into the hospital and told that he had been diagnosed with HIV. "We were very angry, the doctor was very dismissive of us and arrogant," his mother, Denise Turton, told the inquiry in 2019. "We were given no information about the infection, how to manage it or the way in which others could be infected."

The family lived in Nailsea, near Bristol, where they were cast out of the community. "People would not stand by me at our local shops nor would they speak to me at the school," she recalled.

After a seizure in 1992, he was given ten days to live so the family went to the beach with him and wrapped him up. He died on the eighth day. "I often say that we have had three children, rather than four, as it saves us the pain of having to explain to people what had happened to Lee. It is extremely painful to us," Turton said. "It is almost as if he never existed, particularly because he was so young when he passed away."

A few months into Suresh Vaghela's first year as a student at the University of Birmingham, he returned a call from the hospital on the payphone in his halls of residence. The nurse, who had previously treated him for haemophilia as a child, told him he was HIV positive and had two months to live.

"I felt like I'd been slapped really hard and I was trying to get my breath back," Vaghela said.

His brother Praful, who had also been treated for haemophilia with FVIII, had received the same call earlier that day. Both brothers were given the same deadline. Praful, who was always laughing and "added value to everything that he touched", died in 1995 aged 33 from Aids.

Vaghela, who was also diagnosed with hepatitis C and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease from FVIII, survived and attended the inquiry's publication yesterday. For decades, he did not tell anyone outside the family as it would have "ostracised" them

from their close-knit Asian community. "HIV had that stigma, it was a dirty disease," he said. "You couldn't fully talk about it. The Asian community, it's tight knit. Pre-HIV, it's haemophilia, the first thing the community would say is, 'It's karma. You must have done something nasty in your past life to get this.'"

Later in his illness, when his wife fell pregnant, doctors advised the couple to abort the baby. "I went to 70 funerals in one year," he said.

When Sam Rushby was 13 he asked his grandfather why he always became so irate at the politicians on the news. "He just said to me, 'they killed your mum and dad and your sister,'" Rushby recalled. "The government killed your family."

Rushby's grandparents, who had raised him since the age of three, then told him how his parents and four-month-old sister had died of Aids. His father, Gary, was a haemophiliac who had been treated with FVIII at Treloar's College in Hampshire and infected by HIV before unknowingly infecting his pregnant wife, Lesley.

Gary was 34 when he died and Lesley was 23. Rushby, who was three and has no memories of his family, spent the rest of his childhood lying about his parents' cause of death for fear of the implications.

Rushby, 32, below, said he thought his grandfather's accusation was an angry exaggeration. "But when I started talking to him, I was absolutely horrified to find out he is pretty much bang on the truth," he said.

"If you tell someone you've got cancer, the sympathy comes out. You tell someone you've got HIV or hep C, [they ask] 'Do you still take drugs?' I was asked that once in hospital."

Derek Martindale, 60, an IT contractor, was infected with both from treatment for haemophilia with blood products in the 1980s.

His younger brother Richard, who was also a haemophiliac, died aged 23 from Aids-related complications.

He was given the minimum £20,000 ex gratia payment and encouraged to sign a waiver that he

would not take further legal action "or nobody gets anything".

He was the first to give evidence in 2019, alongside two others.



ported American blood products should be withdrawn from the NHS. The government did not listen, and continued importing the blood plasma treatment Factor VIII from the US, where high-risk donors including drug addicts were paid to donate.

The NHS was reliant on imported blood until 1990, due to an "inept, fragmented" system of donation in the UK. UK blood services continued to collect donations from British prisons until 1984, despite the health department being warned since the early 1970s that it was not safe owing to high drug use in this population. The NHS also failed to introduce a hepatitis C screen-

ing test for blood donations until September 1991.

MINISTERS MISLED PUBLIC

Successive governments misled the public by sticking to "lines to take" that played down the risks of infected blood. It particularly criticised Ken Clarke, a health minister during the key period from March 1982 to September 1985, for arguing that "there is no conclusive proof" that Aids could be transmitted through blood products.

The report said it was "indefensible", "misleading" and gave "false reassurance" about the danger of blood products. Margaret Thatcher is also criti-

cised for accepting and repeating briefings that patients had received the "best treatment available" despite there being "no factual basis" for the claim. The same claims were made in briefings to Sir John Major while prime minister, but they were never queried.

COMPENSATION FAILINGS

Langstaff called the failure by Rishi Sunak's government to set out its plans for compensation in the two years since payouts were first recommended a "serious failing which replicates the wrongs of the past" and "compounds the harm which has already been inflicted", adding this perpetuated the

same lack of support that victims had been "fighting for nearly half a century".

PATIENTS STILL UNDIAGNOSED

Hundreds who received contaminated blood still do not know they have been infected with lethal viruses. The report recommends anyone who received a transfusion before 1996 be offered a test for hepatitis C. Langstaff said new patients registering with a GP should be asked if they had had a transfusion. The report identified three groups of patients at risk, including women who had transfusions after giving birth, and people born between 1975 and 1984 who had transfusions as a child.

NHS CULTURE CHANGE ESSENTIAL
Langstaff's main recommendation is for compensation for all affected and called for widespread "culture change" across the NHS to prevent cover-ups, with whistleblowers given greater protection and managers held personally accountable if they fail to take action. He also called for permanent memorials to the victims, including one for the children of Treloar College, where dozens of pupils died from hepatitis and Aids after being given infected blood. *Additional reporting by Kaya Burgess and Lara Wildenberg*
Compensation and restorative justice must be swift, leading article, page 25

News Infected blood scandal

Pillars of the state let down patients for half a century

Kaya Burgess Science Reporter

Doctors, health officials, the NHS, civil servants and government ministers have all been accused of failing to “put patient safety first” over half a century of failures that led to thousands of deaths.

In an excoriating report that attacks pillars of the British state, an inquiry has identified “systemic, collective and individual failures to deal ethically, appropriately and quickly” with the risk of Aids and hepatitis C, and the consequences of contaminated blood transfusions and haemophilia drugs.

More than 3,000 people have died so far and about 30,000 were infected due to a litany of “missed opportunities” to heed warnings over the contamination risk. This was then “compounded” by decades of refusal to admit that mistakes were made, the report found.

Prominent haemophilia doctors and Department of Health officials are criticised by name, while several former prime ministers, including Baroness Thatcher, Sir John Major, Sir Tony Blair and Rishi Sunak, and former ministers including Lord Clarke of Nottingham, are also named.

The NHS is accused of a “defensive closing of ranks” over the scandal instead of seeking an investigation.

The civil service is accused of “drafting unqualified statements” for ministers that gave “false reassurance” to the public because their statements often “strained the facts beyond reality”.

Owing to the decades of delay in setting up the inquiry, doctors have died without facing charges for gross negligence manslaughter, survivors said.

Clive Smith, who represents the Haemophilia Society, said: “There are doctors out there who should have been prosecuted. Those people should have been in the dock, but sadly because of the delay, so many people will not see justice as a result.”

Sir Brian Langstaff, the inquiry’s chairman, said: “This disaster was not an accident.

“The infections happened because those in authority — doctors, the blood services and successive governments — did not put patient safety first.”

The inquiry found that “the NHS and the medical profession” had “compounded the damage”.

It found that “to save face and expense”, several governments have “refused to admit responsibility, showing little interest in finding the truth, listening to those infected, or taking action”.

Decades of warnings about the risk of infection from blood transfusions and imported haemophilia drugs went unheeded by health officials in the 1970s and 1980s. Patients were not informed of the risks associated with the drugs and were often not told of positive HIV tests, which were often conducted in secret by their doctors. There are 380 children among the death toll.

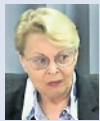
The risk of hepatitis from blood-based treatments had been known about since at least the end of the Second World War, the report found, while doctors treating haemophiliacs “either knew or should have known by

Key players



Professor Arthur Bloom played down the risks of Aids from imported drugs and urged clinics to keep using them. He was also accused of making “misleading” statements. The report said that if Bloom “had been faithful to the facts”, the tragic events “might have taken a different turn”, adding that he “must bear some of the responsibility” for the calamitous response. Bloom died in 1992.

His colleague Dr Charles Rizza jointly issued advice that “treatment should continue as before despite the risks of Aids in addition to hepatitis”. The inquiry found: “The complacency, and absence of any practical advice to reduce the risk, represent a failure of leadership and a missed opportunity.”



Dr Diana Walford, an official at the Department of Health, dismissed warnings that haemophilia drugs might be linked to Aids as “premature” in 1983, believing that the “hazards of [Aids] transmission were unproven”.

Dr Anthony Aronstam was director of the haemophilia centre at Lord Mayor Treloar College. Only 30 of 122 haemophiliac pupils who attended between 1970 and 1987 are still alive. He was criticised for prioritising the “convenience” of administering drugs in large or mixed doses over pupil safety.



Lord Clarke of Nottingham stuck to the line that there was “no conclusive proof” of Aids being transmitted by haemophilia drugs.

While “technically correct”, this was “misleading” and gave “false reassurance” that the drugs were safe, the inquiry said. It accused him of adopting a “combative” style when giving evidence in 2021, claiming this was seen as “dismissive of, and disparaging towards” victims.



Scores of victims, survivors and families were thanked for their fight for justice. Dame Diana Johnson, the Labour MP, is credited with putting pressure on MPs over the scandal, finally prompting Theresa May to announce an inquiry in 2017.

the end of 1982” about the risk of Aids in imported blood-clotting drugs. In some cases, however, senior haemophilia doctors “misled” health officials over the risks.

Professor Arthur Bloom, a world-leading haemophilia doctor, is singled out repeatedly for stinging criticism.

The report calls it “astonishing” that even as late as October 1983 he was still advising officials that there was “no proof” that haemophilia drugs were causing Aids. It also found that Bloom had “misled the Haemophilia Society and others” over the existence of Aids cases linked to the drugs, noting that if Bloom “had been faithful to the facts ... the events that followed might have taken a different turn”.

Bloom also advised haemophilia clinics “that treatment should continue as before despite the risks of Aids in addition to hepatitis”.

Referring to Bloom, who died in 1992, Langstaff said that “disastrously, the Department of Health and Social Security was over-influenced by his advice”, adding that Bloom “must bear some of the responsibility for the UK’s slowness in responding to the risks of Aids to people with haemophilia”.

In 1983, Lord Clarke, who was health minister from 1982 to 1985, said in press releases and in the Commons that there was “no conclusive proof” that Aids could be transmitted through blood products. The report said this line, while “technically correct”, was “indefensible”, “misleading” and gave “false reassurance” about the danger of blood products.

Clarke told The Times this year that this was the “genuine opinion at the time” and said: “In the light of the knowledge they had, I think everybody did their best.”

In 1989, Margaret Thatcher said patients had been given the “best treatment available”. The inquiry found there was “no factual basis” for the claim and no investigation to check its veracity.

Major also gave credence to the same claim as prime minister, which was “wrong” and “unacceptable” and “defied logic”, the report found, adding that patients had been “knowingly exposed to unacceptable risks of infection”.

Thatcher refused to hold an inquiry into compensation, while Sir Tony Blair said in 1999 that he was “not convinced that a public inquiry would provide greater insight”, the report said.

Rishi Sunak’s administration is accused of showing “a lack of transparency and openness” over its plans to compensate survivors, perpetuating the same attitude that victims “have been fighting for nearly half a century”.

The inquiry also singles out some people for praise, however, foremost among them Dr Spence Galbraith, a senior epidemiologist with the Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre, who battled in vain in 1983 to get the Department of Health to “withdraw” imported haemophilia drugs from NHS use “until the risk of Aids transmission has been clarified”.

The contaminated drugs remained in use for at least two more years.

Survivors and victims’ families remember lost loved ones after publication of the Infected Blood Inquiry report in Westminster



They came with dignity and seeking vindication

Tom Peck
Political Sketch



They looked, at first, like a Cup Final crowd, with their custom-printed red T-shirts and black and yellow pin badges, holding up their banners in the hot spring sun. There were a thousand of them, at least. There could have been thousands more. They had brought with them, to Westminster, that familiar sense of anticipation, of daring to believe that something big was about to happen, something they would never forget.

The mood of solemn joy almost concealed the horror. You had to look quite closely even to discern that these were not sporting slogans on their T-shirts, the faces were not those of some overpaid footballer.

“RIP Dad,” read one. “Today we hear the truth.”

“Rest in peace Charles Bellingham,” said another.

One middle-aged man and woman held hands as they walked past Westminster Abbey. On their T-shirts was the same smiling picture

of a boy, two or three years old. That little boy was their big brother.

These are not the sort of scenes that traditionally accompany the publication of a long-overdue public inquiry. Perhaps they should be. Sir Brian Langstaff, chair of the Infected Blood Inquiry, had deliberately hired the largest space in Westminster — the Methodist Central Hall opposite the Houses of Parliament — to read out the summary of his truly devastating report. He sensed, quite correctly, that the people who had campaigned for so long wanted more than the compensation that is now finally coming, more than whatever justice the state might be able to provide them after so long waiting. What they deserved was a moment, and this was it.

It was only as they filed up the stone church steps that they revealed themselves to be no ordinary crowd. The rhythms were off. Every fifth leg was a metal crutch. They stopped and started, they carried each other. It’s the kind of thing you expect to see at a remembrance service for some Second World War battle, except that absolutely no one here had ever



signed up for anything more dangerous than a blood transfusion.

Westminster occasionally decamps to the Methodist Central Hall when events become too large for it. Emmanuel Macron held an election rally for French expats here once. The last time I went it was the spin room for a leaders' debate. Politicians filed in and out firing off ridiculous lines to anyone who'd listen, black was white, white was black, that actually this, not that, is what you've just seen with your own eyes and ears.

It seemed fitting enough. When Sir Brian wandered out on to the stage, he seemed to place his finger down upon the moment and all the spinning stopped. In its place, almost half a century later, the actual, final truth.

His findings had already been published by this point. They were more damning than anyone had dared imagine. The crowd rose to applaud him. He instructed them to applaud themselves back. "This is your report, not mine," he said. "The words come from you and your stories."

Sir Brian Langstaff certainly won't want to be remembered as the hero of this story, but he is certainly the hero they wanted. He had an almost Dickensian aura about him. By the time he was done, no one was spared. Doctors, politicians, civil servants, all had failed utterly, and all had chosen to deceive rather than be found out.

The stories of ruined lives were unimaginable. Of people not merely inadvertently infected with killer diseases, but subjected to needless blood transfusions in the interest of medical research they didn't even know they were taking part in. Of people contracting HIV and not even merely becoming terminally ill but also being shunned by former friends, even families.

But the crowd were at their most animated when he spoke not of the crime but the cover-up. "The report details how three lines were repeatedly deployed by successive governments," he said at one point.

"That people had the best available treatment, that the infections were inadvertent, and that screening for hepatitis C could not have been introduced earlier than September 1991."

He paused for a moment before carrying on. "All of those claims were untrue."

If it had been a Cup Final, this would have been the winning goal. They rose to their feet in unison, all of them that could. They applauded, they cheered. That they had been lied to for decades was now a matter of final, incontrovertible public record. They had been vindicated.

When they filed out again, they carried with them a curious looking souvenir — the very thick green book, hundreds of pages long, that is Sir Brian's full report. A few of them were still carrying it two hours later, having made it to the public gallery

of the House of Commons. The gallery was far busier than the chamber itself. By half past five on a Monday, most MPs's evidently had other places to be.

Up in the gallery, they listened in with far less a sense of rapture to what Rishi Sunak and Sir Keir Starmer had to say. One woman, again in red T-shirt, simply pressed the ball of her thumb into her eye and smeared away a tear.

The prime minister apologised on behalf of the entire country, for a scandal that occurred for the most part when he was a little boy himself.

He promised compensation, "whatever it takes." Already the talk is of £10 billion, a number so large there have had to be background briefings on where the money will come from, its potential consequences for a fragile economy. It's a number so large that everyone, frankly, has a right to be angry.

He promised to make sure that "nothing like this ever happens again." He looked like he meant it.

One minor detail that may set that in context, however, is that for a lot of the past few years, the inquiry has saved money by sharing facilities with another public inquiry, the one in which a whole load of nice village sub-postmasters were sent to jail to spare the blushes of a computer system. Things "like this" seem to happen with alarming regularity. And decades after the event, they are still not resolved.

Haemophilia school tested drugs on boys with scant consent

Lara Wildenberg

A school with a haemophilia clinic on site treated pupils as "objects for research" rather than children, the Infected Blood Inquiry found.

Only 30 pupils who attended Lord Mayor Treloar College, near Alton, Hampshire, have survived from a group of 122 who attended between 1970 and 1987. They would all now be in their forties, fifties and sixties.

Sir Brian Langstaff, chairman of the inquiry, in a volume dedicated to the school, described how it turned its "laudable aim" of education for haemophiliacs into "a nightmare of tragic proportions" by infecting pupils with Factor VIII. He reported how multiple research projects were carried out during the 1970s and 1980s without consent from parents or pupils, often experimenting with high dosages.

Clinicians were aware of the risks of Factor VIII but did not convey this or change the treatment regimes in response to the risk of Aids.

None of the pupils were told they were being tested for HIV and many were never informed that they were HIV positive. For those who were, the experience was "unsupportive, insensitive and wrong": they were called into a room and pointed at. None of the boys were offered counselling or support.

When infections did emerge in late 1984, Treloar clinicians told pupils it had been "an unavoidable accident". Langstaff, however, wrote in the report: "What occurred was not an inevitable course of events. It was not a tragic accident, in the sense of something that was unavoidable. It was not the result of an unknown against which steps could not be taken effectively ... The pupils were often regarded as objects for research rather than as children whose treatment should be firmly focused on their

of hepatitis, but not to worry as they had the "mild type".

The report also recorded how small groups of pupils were called to see the doctors over their lunch break, when staff pointed "yes, no, yes, no" at each boy to indicate whether they were HIV positive or not. One said he was told that he had two to three years to live and then told to return to class. Many of these boys were less than ten years old.

Not only did the report describe Treloar's inadequate communication of medical treatments, but it also found that the haemophilia clinic was an "outlier" in administering "a deliberately heavy use of concentrates", often treating boys with a mixture of products, particularly commercial material.

In 1984, "a year in which generally the risks of Aids being transmitted by blood became clear beyond doubt" the school's concentrate usage was recorded at its highest level. A small fridge was used to store NHS material and a large one for commercial products.

There was no written policy and Dr Anthony Aronstam, the centre's director, did not always practise the same "approach" that he preached. A conversation between Aronstam and the chief executive of Speywood Laboratories in August 1978 described how Aronstam's "first requirement is convenience of administration".

The report said: "Because of the concentration of young pupils with severe haemophilia, who were told to attend the sick bay if and when they needed therapy, and who had lessons to return to, the time taken to deal with each individually could be significant."

As a result, Aronstam was recorded as saying that pupils could often have 15 infusions at a time, because it was easier, and hence quicker, to dissolve.

The risk of viruses transmitted through blood products was "well known" to clinicians at Treloar but they had convinced themselves of the success of their own treatment approach.

The report concluded: "The likeliest reason for the Treloar treatments having the catastrophic results they did is that clinicians were seduced by wishing to believe, against available information, that intensive therapy might produce better overall results; by the desirability of convenience in administration rather than the safety of treatment; and by ignoring some of the treatment implications of the research projects they wished to pursue."

One former pupil, Adrian Goodyear, recalled spending a day with Aronstam at his house with another pupil. When the boys brought in a lemonade tray to the kitchen, they found the doctor "welled full of tears" and rocking as if "emotionally in pain". When Aronstam was asked what was wrong, Goodyear said he replied: "We've f***ed up ... We've messed up. It's all gone wrong."

Goodyear said that his companion asked Aronstam if the boys would be OK. "He said: 'We're going to do our absolute best for you.' He never said we were going to be OK."

A spokesman for Treloar, now called Treloar School and College, said: "The inquiry's report shows the full extent of this horrifying scandal. We are devastated that some of our former pupils were so tragically affected and hope the findings provide some solace for their families." The school called for proper compensation to be paid "urgently".

It also said that it backed the report's recommendation of a public and accessible memorial to the victims.



Treloar School and College has called for compensation to be paid urgently

individual best interests alone. This was unethical and wrong."

The inquiry was told how some pupils turned yellow in about 1975, which is when the headmaster, Alexander Macpherson, is likely to have known that treatments might result in hepatitis. It also found few records of conversations about consent and explaining the risks to parents being recorded. "It is more likely than not that there were very few such conversations," the report said.

"Little truly informative was said to pupils," the report said, referencing the evidence of Gary Webster, a former pupil, who recalled newspapers disappearing from the library when reports of Aids had started to appear. "It is likely that this was done by staff to shield them from the knowledge of what was being said," the report added.

Pupils received "false reassurances" of both diseases. They were told that there was a "very small risk" of getting Aids and also that there were two types

TIMES PHOTOGRAPHER JAMES GLOSSOP



Equally spaced Opera North is holding a sale at the Howard Centre in Leeds on May 25 and 26 of costumes from performances stretching back over three decades

Quintagram® No 1947

Solve all five concise clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Primed for action (5)

2 Filled with fumes (5)

3 Intoxicated, sloshed (7)

4 Acidic condiment (7)

5 Mojito or margarita, eg (8)

A	A	A	C	C	C	D	D
E	E	E	G	I	I	I	K
K	K	L	L	M	N	O	O
P	R	R	S	T	V	Y	Y

Solutions see T2 MindGames p15
Cryptic clues T2 MindGames p14

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Self-driving cars 'on roads by 2026'

Ben Clatworthy
Transport Correspondent

Self-driving cars have been given the green light to operate on British roads within two years, after a bill aimed at regulating the vehicles was passed into law.

The approval paves the way for the introduction of "level four", high-automation vehicles on the roads. Such vehicles do not require a "safety driver", allowing motorists to become passengers in their own cars.

The Automated Vehicles Act says that when a vehicle is in self-driving mode, any passenger will not be responsible for its performance. Instead, the burden of responsibility will lie on corporations such as insurance providers, software developers or vehicle manufacturers. The owner will retain responsibility, however, for roadworthiness and obtaining insurance.

Mark Harper, the transport secretary, said the passing of the bill was a "milestone moment for our self-driving industry" although the latest polls suggest that Britons would be apprehensive about getting into an autonomous vehicle.

A YouGov survey found that more than two thirds of those questioned would feel unsafe in a driverless car, the highest number since the polling began in 2019. Of those asked, 38 per cent said they would feel "very unsafe". A further 29 per cent said they would feel "fairly unsafe".

Ministers said road safety was "at the heart of the legislation" and the law would require self-driving vehicles to "achieve a level of safety at least as high as careful and competent human drivers". It is believed that automated vehicles will improve overall road safety — reducing the number of deaths and in-

Behind the story

On a grey November afternoon last year I sat in the passenger seat of a Jaguar I-Pace as it glided to a stop at a junction outside Tufnell Park Tube station in north London (Ben Clatworthy writes).

So far so normal. Except the car, fitted with Wayve technology, was driving itself. As the traffic lights turned green the car edged forward, letting a van and a few cars pass, before making the right turn and accelerating off.

It's all very impressive, if mildly nerve-racking. While the traffic in London isn't quite as erratic as, say, Naples, it's not a million miles off. The Jaguar I-Pace I was in was classed as prototype, so although it will self-drive a human is still required for safety.

juries from drink-driving, speeding and tiredness — given that 88 per cent of road collisions are caused, at least in part, by human error.

Harper said: "Britain stands at the threshold of an automotive revolution and this new law is a milestone moment for our self-driving industry which has the potential to change the way we travel for ever. While this doesn't take away



Ben Clatworthy and safety driver Tim go for a spin that had one heart-in-mouth moment

Tim, the safety driver for my trip, is forced to jump in and take back control of the car on several occasions, but there was only one slight heart-in-mouth moment when the car lurched forward at a busy junction. Tim, quick as a flash, stepped calmly on the brake to avoid any greater issue.

Such incidents, however, are needed as the developers train and improve the technology. Those in the know tell me it has come on in leaps and bounds even in the short few months since my journey in the car.

One thing that is noticeable is how rigidly the car sticks to the speed limit, making it feel

somewhat slow, but also revealing the stark reality of just how often people drive too fast.

Seeing an automated supermarket delivery van driving down the road will be a reality by the end of the decade. You'll just have to wait a little longer for an autonomous car to fetch you and drive you back from the pub.

people's ability to choose to drive themselves, our landmark legislation means self-driving vehicles can be rolled out on British roads as soon as 2026, in a real boost to both safety and our economy."

The government hopes the law will avoid the issues that have beset the self-driving revolution in the United States.

In December last year two driverless

taxis with Waymo, formerly the Google self-driving car project, crashed into the same truck within minutes of each other in Arizona. The company was forced to recall the technology.

In November Cruise, a subsidiary of General Motors, recalled all 950 of its autonomous cars to update software after one of them dragged a pedestrian to the side of a street in San Francisco.

An industry-recognised scale developed by the US engineering association SAE International, has determined six levels of automation ranging from zero, fully manual, to five, fully autonomous.

Until now, legislation permitted on British roads only level-two vehicles, which have limited automation.

Self-driving trials are already being held across the country, including in London, Oxford and Milton Keynes.

It was announced earlier this month that Wayve, a British driverless car company founded in 2017, has raised more than \$1 billion to commercialise its products.

Alex Kendall, the co-founder and chief executive of Wayve, said the new law was a vote of confidence in his industry. "Self-driving technology promises a safer, smarter and more sustainable future of transport," he said.

"There's still some way to go with secondary legislation before we can reap the full benefits of self-driving vehicles in the UK but we are confident the government will prioritise these next steps so this technology can be deployed as soon as possible."

Grocery and parcel delivery companies are likely to be among the first to make the jump into the world of autonomous vehicles, with Asda and Ocado already running trials.

Autonomous buses could also be introduced, starting with small, controlled areas, such as shuttles at airports or for short local routes. Farming is also in line to benefit, with companies such as John Deere envisaging a new world of AI and robotics.

Experts believe that driverless vehicles for passengers, including "robotaxis", will follow widespread commercial usage. Mass private ownership of automated cars is said to be a fair way off, largely because of the cost.

Less than half of young adults know about D-Day

Jack Blackburn
History Correspondent

Most young adults cannot tell you what D-Day was and one in five believe that there is no longer any need to commemorate it or similar events, according to research by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

A survey, conducted to coincide with the 80th anniversary of D-Day, June 6, found that many young people find

commemoration events boring and think the money spent on them could be better allocated.

The commission is calling for more to be done to engage the public with the history of the two world wars, as veterans die and living memory of the Second World War goes with them.

"We are at a turning point for the legacy of commemoration," said Claire Horton, who is director-general of the commission. "Events such as these are vital to maintain connection and inspire interest in honouring those who came before."

Of 2,000 adults polled, fewer than half (48 per cent) of those aged 18 to 34 could recognise D-Day as the day on which Allied forces landed on the beaches of Normandy. Overall, 59 per cent could identify it correctly.

Within the youngest age group, 16 per cent said they did not know what D-Day was while 10 per cent thought it was "the day that Germany surrendered to the Allied forces unconditionally". Nine per cent thought it was the evacuation from Dunkirk, and 8 per cent thought it was the day of victory in the Battle of Britain.

Young adults' attitudes towards commemorating such events were starkly apathetic. Among people aged 18 to 24, 22 per cent of respondents said that enough time had passed and that there was no need to hold commemorative events for the world wars.

There was also criticism of the events that are held currently. One in ten of the young adults polled said they were "boring" and "repetitive", while a third said that the money spent on commemorations would be better used supporting other charitable endeavours. However, 61 per cent of respondents to the survey as a whole said the anniversary would be an opportunity for reflection.

"There is clearly work to be done to better engage young people in commemoration efforts," Horton said. "Our research shows that young people are keen to see better educational programmes to support these efforts, and as a nation we must come together to ensure that the next generation carries on the legacy of liberation passed down to us by those who gave their lives for our freedoms."

This increasing apathy and ignorance among younger generations has been a cause of concern as survivors of the war reach the age of 100. Many of the veterans are already centenarians, with the rest all in their late nineties. Veterans' organisations are placing increasing emphasis on the idea of the torch being passed so that a new generation will also say "Lest we forget".

The war graves commission has taken this idea literally for this year's commemorations and, at the launch of their events last week, a "torch of remembrance" was lit and symbolically handed by a veteran to a young person. The torch is part of a series of events called "Lighting their legacies", which is touring Britain and Normandy.

Brutality of war, letters, page 24



Boy's own escapades of Judy the daring dog

Torpedoed, wounded by shrapnel, shipwrecked, bitten by a crocodile and taken as a prisoner of war: it is an extraordinary war record — even more so because it belongs to a dog (Jack Blackburn writes).

Judy, a liver-and-white

pointer, served with distinction in the Far East during the Second World War and was the only dog to be a PoW. She also saved the lives of her human colleagues. Now the National Archives have found the letter which announced that Judy was to be awarded the animal equivalent of the Victoria Cross.

A historian stumbled upon the document from 1946 which announced that Judy was to receive the Dickin Medal for gallantry, handed out by the People's Dispensary for Sick

Animals. The letter includes the citation: "For magnificent courage and endurance in Japanese prison camps which helped to maintain morale among her fellow prisoners, and also for saving many lives through her intelligence and watchfulness."

The letter was discovered by a historian researching the National Archives' exhibition *Great Escapes*, the remarkable stories of Second World War captives. Such letters are not unusual but Judy's story was eye-catching. "We hold many

Judy, a pedigree pointer, with Frank Williams, who looked after her while in a PoW camp, and smuggled her home after the war

recommendations for the Dickin Medal for animals during the Second World War but it was the letter of recommendation for Judy, buried among all the other letters, which really stood out," said William Butler, head of modern collections at the National Archives. "It really emphasised what an incredible life she had."

Born in 1936, Judy had some pre-war service on the gunboat HMS Gnat, stationed on the Yangtze River. She was an exemplary lookout and could sense river pirates long before the sailors did. Then war broke out and she travelled around the Far East.

In February 1942 she was on HMS Grasshopper when it was torpedoed during the evacuation of Singapore. The crew had abandoned ship and rowed to a nearby island before they realised Judy was absent. When a crewman went back to find food, he found Judy. Returning with the sailor, she proved to be vital to their survival. The men had no fresh water until Judy went digging on the shore and found a spring.

A lifeline came in the form of an evacuation ship, for which the crew trekked 200 miles in the jungle of Sumatra. This was ill-fated, for Judy was bitten by a crocodile and then they were captured by the Japanese.

At the Gloegoer camp, Judy was befriended by Leading Aircraftman Frank Williams. When Japanese guards threatened to shoot her, Williams went to the commandant and had him register Judy as an official PoW, a move that granted her formal protection. They were later moved to another camp, and during the journey the transport ship was torpedoed. Judy was shipwrecked again — but was seen pushing flotsam to struggling seamen and soldiers.

When the war ended, Williams smuggled Judy home to Liverpool. After a six-month quarantine, she was given the medal.

Warship within yards of tanker crash

Kieran Gair

A Royal Navy warship came within 400 yards of crashing into an oil tanker after a "fatigued" officer left a junior colleague in charge, a court martial heard.

The HMS Penzance almost collided with a Norwegian tanker in Scottish waters after Lieutenant Euan Playford-Johnston left an inexperienced officer to navigate the ship in a busy shipping lane at night. This action brought the warship "within a hair's breadth of disaster", a judge said, adding that the consequences of a collision with the

472ft tanker would have been "unthinkable".

Bulford Military Court Centre in Wiltshire heard that Playford-Johnston, 30, had been "fatigued" after a long day on the bridge of the minehunter, based at Faslane, on April 17 last year.

The second officer altered HMS Penzance's course to avoid a tugboat but in doing so unwittingly set course for the path of the Sten Baltic, a vessel that transports oil and chemicals.

The prosecutor said Playford-Johnston failed to report the tugboat's presence and also failed to report the near

miss to his captain. Both are breaches. Playford-Johnston has been given a severe reprimand, lost his seniority and been fined £3,600 after admitting negligently hazarding a ship and two counts of breaching standing orders.

In sentencing, John Atwill, assistant judge advocate, said: "Your actions ... brought that ship within a hair's breadth of disaster and your career within a hair's breadth of ending. It brought you within a hair's breadth of prison."

Lieutenant Commander James Babington, for the defence, said Playford-Johnston was under great pressure.

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Daredevil kayaker feared dead after being sucked into rapids

Georgia Lambert

A British whitewater kayaker is feared dead after being sucked out of his kayak in the currents of a river in Switzerland.

Bren Orton, 29, disappeared after rapids dragged him underwater in the Meleza River in the Ticino Region of the country last Thursday.

A search and rescue operation has been under way to find the daredevil sportsman, who broke a world record in 2018 after plunging down 128 feet of the Big Banana Falls in Mexico.

His disappearance was revealed by his sponsor, Pyranha, the British maker of Orton's high-performance kayaks. He was believed to have been dragged



Bren Orton, 29, was in Switzerland when he vanished, his sponsor said

down into the water by recirculating waves.

The company posted the announcement on its Instagram feed.

It said: "It is with a heavy heart we announce an accident involving Bren Orton. While kayaking on the Meleza River in Switzerland, Bren became trapped in a recirculating feature and did not resurface."

"Authorities and friends are tirelessly continuing their search efforts, and at this time, Bren is considered missing."

Local police have been searching for Orton since his disappearance and police in Italy are believed to have been helping with the operation, as well as a team of 15 kayakers. Orton's friends and

family have taken to social media to share their condolences.

James Reeves shared a statement on Facebook: "Every few years, we seem to lose a friend to our sport. Each loss is tough, and this one cuts deep."

"Bren Orton was an incredible human. From his teenage years, his warm smile and friendly nature shone as brightly as his kayaking skills. Always keen to help and inspire others."

A spokesman for the Ticino police said: "Shortly before 2.45pm in the area of Palagnedra, a man who was previously in a kayak was reported missing in the Meleza River."

"The searches began immediately and involved agents from the cantonal

police and, in support, from the Ascona police as well as rescuers from the Locarnese and Valli Ambulance Service."

Orton was a popular social media influencer who shared the sport's highs and lows with his 57,000 followers.

In December 2022, Orton posted a heartfelt video about the sport to his YouTube channel.

Drone shots of the daredevil descending colossal waterfalls were dubbed with a voiceover of him talking about his journey of love, loss, grief and mental health as a professional athlete.

He said that he felt "betrayed by the sport" before asking: "How can something that brings me so much joy cause me so much pain?"

Sex-scandal teacher liked to play 'cool girl', says colleague

Constance Kampfner, Charlie Parker

A teacher who slept with two of her pupils was more sociable with students than staff and behaved "as if she was one of the Year 11s", a school insider has said.

Rebecca Joynes, 30, was convicted last week of sexual activity with children after she groomed one boy and became pregnant by the other.

The scandal at the secondary school in Greater Manchester triggered a breakdown of relations between pupils and teachers, a former colleague told The Times, as a "toxic" atmosphere led to an exodus of "distracted" staff.

"They completely stopped trusting us," the teacher said, adding that rumours spread following Joynes's suspension that she had been buying alcohol for teenagers whom she had invited to a party at her flat.

As behaviour deteriorated in classes, eight male students created an online group jokingly identifying themselves as the maths teacher's "victims". Other pupils created TikTok memes labelling her a "paedo" who "likes kids" and graffitied a lavatory with the words: "Free Ms Joynes".

Details of her "double life" have emerged after a court heard that she had also allowed a third boy to visit her

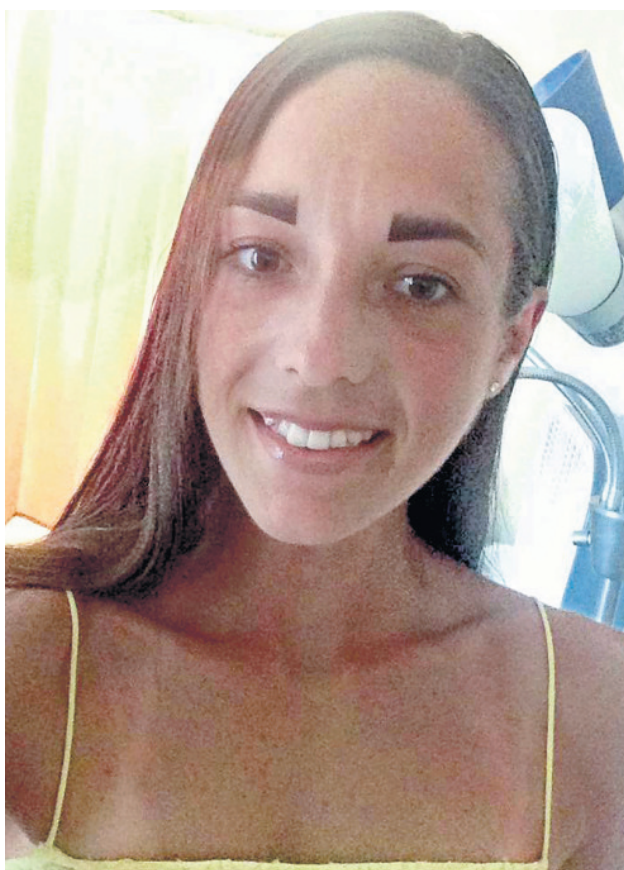
home twice, though no sexual activity took place.

Joynes was described by a colleague as behaving "as if she was one of the Year 11s" and a "cool girl". The former staff member spotted her chatting with female students about fashion during break time and "strutting" down the corridors between classes while they cheered her on. With hindsight, they feared this was "over-friendly".

Although Joynes had good working relationships with other staff, she never attended work events or interacted with colleagues "on a personal level", the colleague claimed, adding: "Rebecca never joined. Even the near-retiring teachers would have had a drink."

Joynes was suspended in October 2021 following a report to Childline that she had had sex with a 15-year-old student after buying him a £345 Gucci belt and driving him to her apartment. She then became pregnant by a second teenager while she was on bail for having sex with the first. Joynes's baby daughter is now being cared for by her teenage father.

Once a "quiet" champion gymnast and member of her university cheer-leading team, she is now awaiting sentencing after a jury found her guilty of six charges of engaging in sexual activity with a child, including two while



Rebecca Joynes "strutted like a fashion model" in front of pupils at her school

being a person in a position of trust. What made her crimes worse, her former colleague said, was that the pandemic had left the children on a slower "developmental track". They added: "I would say that the Year 11s were Year 9s in terms of maturity levels."

Staff were told to cease all contact with the maths teacher and remove her

from any WhatsApp groups after her suspension. However, it is understood that she was still making herself contactable to under-16s on Snapchat.

Teachers at first were only told that there had been a serious safeguarding complaint and Joynes had been asked to leave. Her former colleague, who has spoken out due to concern over how the

school handled the situation, said that it was the children who made the allegations known to teachers in class. They described how behaviour quickly deteriorated, with students going "off the wall" and acting as though they were "untouchable". Parents who were disappointed in their children's GCSE results that summer would blame it on the fact that "we have teachers f***ing our kids". The former staff member said: "It was so mortifying to me."

Everyone was shocked that Joynes, a model teacher and a "delightful person to work with", had been leading this "double life".

"I would never have thought it could have been someone like her," the teacher added. "She was strict. Not over the top, she was just really in control of her class. I remember you could hear a pin drop."

"If I asked any of the students who their favourite maths teacher was, all the kids would've said, 'Ms Joynes. [She] is so funny, she's a really cool teacher and she gets us'."

Although the source said that they had never seen Joynes behave inappropriately towards teenage boys, they said that she often walked down the corridor with a cardigan slung over her shoulders as if it was "a fashion walkway". She was described by pupils as "pretty" and gained the nickname Bunda Becky, using a slang term for bottom, Manchester crown court heard last week.

Joynes's neighbours this week recalled being woken up when police cars pulled up outside the Joynes family home in the Wirral where she was staying. "There was no noise, just loads of blue flashing lights. I had no idea what it was about ... now I do know!" one said. Another resident expressed sympathy for her parents, describing them as "good, hard-working people".

A mother at the school told The Times that she was "shocked" when the allegations emerged, saying: "You hear about it, but you don't necessarily think of it happening to children of that age. Or you don't necessarily think it will be boys. It's often girls. It's hard for your children to be kept safe anywhere."

Ascot accountant 'told not to breastfeed'

Jonathan Ames Legal Editor

The late Queen's favourite racecourse is at the centre of a legal row after an accountant claimed that she could not breastfeed in her office at Ascot.

Helen Ballerino, 38, was working for a trade body when she was allegedly told it would be "inappropriate" to nurse her baby while in the office for "keeping in touch" days during her maternity leave. Ballerino told an employment tribunal the incident was one of a series of discriminatory actions by her former employer, the Racecourse Association.

She sued the association for discrimination and unfair dismissal. Her case

was dismissed two years ago by a tribunal in Reading. Ballerino began the role in 2018 and was dismissed the next year. She told the original tribunal she had agreed with bosses that she could feed her son in her office. She said her manager later told her this would be "inappropriate". Association officials denied that, arguing that what was meant was that it would be inappropriate to work in the office while caring for a baby.

Ballerino left her part-time job when a wider role was created in its place and she was made redundant. She was invited to apply for the role but was advised it might not be suitable. In her legal action, Ballerino claimed she had faced dis-

crimination as a mother in not being allowed to breastfeed and had been unfairly dismissed because she was not offered a suitable alternative role.

At the original tribunal, Judge Laurie Anstis dismissed the claim, ruling that the objection was to having an employee also caring for a baby. Ballerino took her claim to the employment appeal tribunal in London, where Robin Pickard, her counsel, argued there had been a failure to apply the law correctly in deciding whether the redundancy was related to maternity. Safia Tharoo, counsel for the association, said the original ruling was correct. The judge reserved her decision until a later date.

Woman dies at home from attack by own XL bully dogs

George Sandeman

A woman has died after being attacked by her own XL bully dogs at her home in east London.

Armed officers were called to the scene in Hornchurch at 1.12pm yesterday following reports of the attack.

The injured woman, believed to be in her fifties, was treated by paramedics from the London Ambulance Service but was pronounced dead at the scene.

The Metropolitan Police said that they sent armed officers to the house because of the threat posed by the dogs,

which they subsequently seized. The two dogs were found to be registered as belonging to the XL bully breed, which was banned by the government on February 1 after a series of life-changing and sometimes fatal attacks on people. Owing one is an offence unless it has a certificate of exemption, and it must be neutered, microchipped and muzzled in public.

The police said the dogs were contained in a room at the house before their arrival. "The family of the woman are being supported by officers," a Met spokesman said.

News Politics

Gove backs police powers to halt

Ben Ellery Crime Editor
Steven Swinford Political Editor
Matt Dathan Home Affairs Editor

Pro-Palestinian protesters who chant "from the river to the sea" are seeking the "erasure" of Israel, Michael Gove will say today as a government adviser calls for police to be given stronger powers to intervene.

In a speech to be given in north London, Gove, the levelling-up secretary, says that although it is "legitimate and sometimes necessary" to criticise the conduct of the Israeli government, others have a different agenda. "Now the focus is on the delegitimisation and demonisation of the state of Israel as a prelude to its dismantlement and destruction," he says. "That is what the cry of 'from the river to the sea' envisages. The end of Zion. The erasure of the Jewish people's home."

Gove's speech comes on the day that Lord Walney, the government adviser on political violence, publishes the findings of a three-year review. Walney will call on the government to give police more leeway to refuse permission for protests to take place, according to government sources who have seen his report.

The move would enable police to take into account the cumulative im-

part of regular protests on a particular community when deciding whether to allow rallies. It would allow the police to consider the effect that the regular pro-Palestinian protests have on Jewish people in London, for example. It would also give the police greater leeway to dictate which days or particular areas that protests are allowed in order to prevent them clashing with other groups or public events that require a mass police presence.

Protesters who breach the ban or other conditions imposed by the police would face an unlimited on-the-spot fine, up from the £1,000 allowed under the Public Order Act 1986.

Pro-Palestinian marches have taken place in London on 14 weekends since the October 7 terrorist attacks on Israel by Hamas. They have featured numerous antisemitic slogans and chants and Robin Simcox, the government's counterextremism commissioner, has said that London has become a "no-go zone for Jews" when the protests are taking place.

Gove will also criticise camps at universities, which he says are "alive with anti-Israel rhetoric" and have been "deeply, profoundly intimidating to Jewish students and others".

"The encampments, in their slogans, programmes and demands reflect the

prevailing intellectual fashion of decolonisation," he says in his speech. "If these arguments were restricted to the seminar room and the journal article that might be one thing. But as history reminds us, ideas have consequences. Young minds can become entranced, and ideologies can lead to action."

Scotland Yard has faced repeated criticism over its policing of the pro-Palestinian rallies, most recently over video showing one of its officers telling Gideon Falter, chief executive of the Campaign Against Antisemitism, that his "openly Jewish" appearance risked breaching the peace at one of the protests in London last month.

Walney's report, to be published today after a three-year review, contains more than 40 recommendations on how government and public bodies can better respond to intimidating, violent

and disruptive protests that have affected a wide-range of public life over the past few years.

At present the police can only impose a ban on a protest if they believe it will cause serious disorder such as a riot. This threshold would be lowered under Walney's recommendation so police could take into account the cumulative impact of the protests when deciding whether to ban future rallies and demonstrations.

The Public Order Act that was passed by parliament last year only allowed the cumulative impact of protests to be considered when deciding what conditions to impose on rallies, rather than allowing the police to ban them altogether.

Walney's report also calls for penalties for people who break the conditions of protests to face greater fines. His review found that the present fines were not high enough to act as a sufficient deterrent. Organisers of protests must inform the police within seven days and participants must comply with the conditions agreed with the police. Walney's report says that these rules are increasingly being ignored and the level of fines, which start at £200, are not high enough to deter people from breaking the conditions. Letters, page 24

Any questions?

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Labour denies self-ID on gender by back door

Geraldine Scott
Senior Political Correspondent

Labour has said that it will not force through substantial changes to the gender recognition process without "considering the impact on others" as the party was accused of allowing self-identification "by the back door".

The Times revealed yesterday that Labour was considering allowing a single family GP to validate a gender recognition certificate, which legally allows a person to change their gender.

It is part of an attempt to make the process of obtaining a certificate "less medicalised" by cutting the number of doctors from two to one and abolishing a panel of lawyers and medical professionals who approve applications.

It has not yet been decided whether the sole medical professional would be a GP or a gender specialist. However,

Sarah Jones, a shadow minister, said that the party had "learnt from" Scotland's botched attempt at reforms, where doctors would have been removed from the process completely.

Jones told Times Radio: "We do want to update the law but there will be a consultation on how that is done."

"We've learnt from what happened in Scotland that you can't slam in legislation that bumps up against other rights and that's what we need to try and balance."

"So there will be a consultation and there will be that requirement for a diagnosis. I mean it's gender dysphoria, isn't it, that we're talking about when people change gender."

Jones said that Labour had been "on a journey" on transgender issues "as have, I think, a lot of people as we've unpicked some of these issues". However, Helen Joyce, the director of advocacy at

the charity Sex Matters, said yesterday that any move towards "granting a gender recognition certificate on the say-so of a single GP, rather than a specialist panel, is self-ID by the back door".

Labour last year dropped the Corbyn-era policy to allow people who want to obtain a gender recognition certificate to self-identify, instead saying that medical involvement would be retained. However, Joyce said: "The current lack of clarity on the meaning of 'sex' in the Equality Act means any shift towards self-ID would be disastrous for the rights of women and girls."

"These proposals further strengthen the case for urgently amending the Equality Act to make the definition of sex clear. Under the proposals, applicants would no longer need a diagnosis of gender dysphoria from two doctors and a spouse would no longer be able to object to the change."

Jones said that the matter of a spouse needing to give consent for a change of gender was the "most obvious" aspect that needed to be updated in the Gender Recognition Act (GRA).

Labour Women's Declaration, a campaign group set up by Labour activists to advocate sex-based rights, said: "All Labour's policies on sex and gender, including on hate crime, conversion practices and GRA reform that were agreed last July at the National Policy Forum, are now out of date."

"They need to be reviewed and revised in the light of subsequent watershed events including the publication of the Cass Review, the fiasco of the Scottish government's Hate Crime Act and its Gender Recognition Reform Bill, which had to be blocked due to breaches of the Equality Act."

Three stages that will reveal the real Starmer, William Hague, page 21



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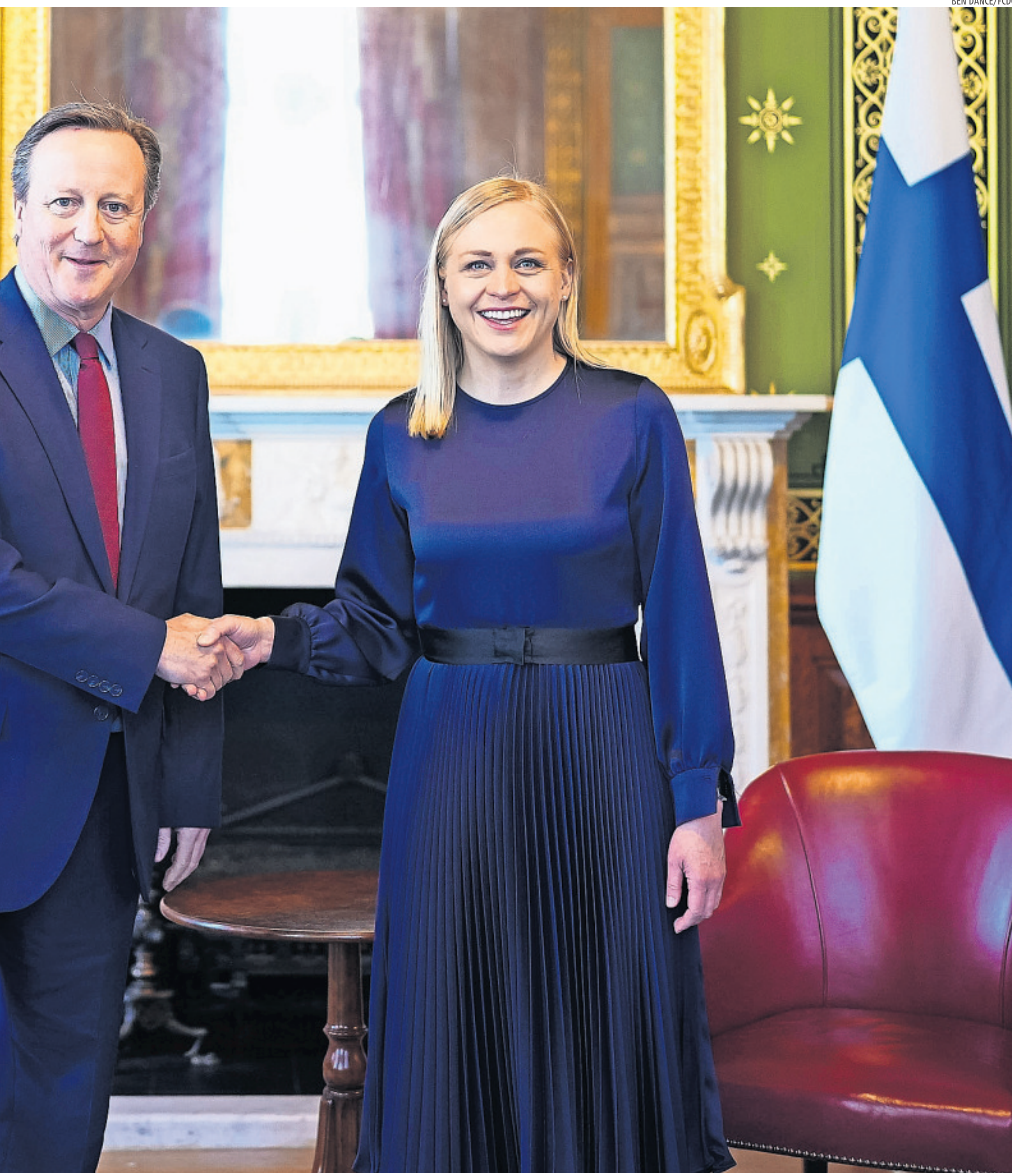
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protests calling for 'end of Israel'



Elina Valtonen, the Finnish foreign minister, at the Foreign Office to discuss a strategic partnership for the defence of Ukraine

Tories will train jobless at boot camps

Chris Smyth Whitehall Editor

The unemployed will be sent to skills “boot camps” to train them to become waiters, carers and delivery drivers under plans to cut immigration.

Mel Stride, the work and pensions secretary, will acknowledge today that Rishi Sunak’s immigration crackdown will leave some sectors short of workers. He will insist, however, that “for too long we have relied on labour from abroad when there is great talent right here in the UK”.

Stride will set out plans to work with businesses to identify the areas most short of workers and develop training programmes for the unemployed.

The first sectors are likely to include hospitality, social care, construction, logistics and manufacturing.

The scheme will initially be targeted at the 1.5 million unemployed but ministers hope to expand it to the 2.8 million long-term sick and others outside the workforce.

Stride will say he is worried by the rise in “hidden unemployment” — those who are neither in work nor looking for

a job, citing the seven million people who are not earning and not studying.

He will promise to “uncover and unleash Britain’s hidden army of talent”.

Stride and Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor, insisted last week that there were “ample opportunities” for the unemployed to find work. He will set out plans to help them, likened to the post-Covid reforms to deal with an acute shortage of HGV drivers.

“The new visa rules brought in by the home secretary will mean around 300,000 people who arrived last year would not be able to under the new rules,” Stride said. “This presents a recruitment challenge for some employers in certain sectors, particularly those that have relied more on migration.”

“But this is a huge opportunity for the thousands of jobseekers within our domestic workforce to move into roles that have previously been filled by overseas workers.”

Jobcentre training schemes, skills “boot camps” and changes to recruitment rules will encourage more Britons to fill vacancies. Ministers also want employers to make simple changes to

attract workers, such as boosting access to public lavatories, cited as essential to encourage more women to become HGV drivers.

Funding for the initiatives is likely to come from the £2.5 billion allocated to programmes, such as the Restart scheme, which offers tailored job support to the long-term unemployed.

Sunak is trying to make welfare a key dividing line at the election as he tries to reduce the rising costs of sickness benefits. He will argue that Sir Keir Starmer would shy away from such reforms.

Alison McGovern, the acting shadow work and pensions secretary, said that the government had “run down” the skills and training system so that the country now had record net migration.

“They should be putting in place plans to tackle worker shortages and adopting Labour’s plans to connect the immigration system to skills, not setting up another talking shop,” she said.

“Labour has a plan to get Britain working by cutting NHS waiting lists, reforming job centres, making work pay and supporting people into good jobs.”

Visa curbs threaten to close universities, Cameron warns PM

Steven Swinford, Matt Dathan

The foreign secretary has warned Rishi Sunak that universities will face job losses and even closure if he pushes ahead with curbs to graduate visas in an attempt to reduce migration.

The prime minister is preparing to introduce curbs on graduate visas to ensure that only the “best and the brightest” are allowed to come to the UK.

A coalition of ministers including Lord Cameron of Chipping Norton, Gillian Keegan, the education secretary, Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor, and James Cleverly, the home secretary, is opposing the move.

Keegan wrote to Sunak last week to express concerns about the economic impact. Analysis by the Department for Education found existing curbs on family members joining students could lead to a 0.5 per cent hit to GDP.

The ministers all support the current approach but there are concerns about going further. Sunak is under pressure to act, with the net migration figures, published on Thursday, expected to show the numbers remain high.

The graduate visa scheme allows foreign students to stay in the UK for two years after their studies but critics say it is being abused. One option being considered would limit graduate visas to higher-performing Russell Group universities. Another would reduce the length of the visas.

Cameron said: “One of the consequences of any restrictions on graduate visas is that universities will experience further financial difficulties — leading to job losses, closures and a reduction in

research. International students make a significant economic contribution to the UK and are vital to the sustainability of the UK’s higher education sector.”

A government source said: “This is the difference between growth and recession.” An ally of Sunak said: “Ministers get lobbied and make a case for their equities but the PM has to take the right decision for the country.”

Professor Brian Bell, chairman of the Migration Advisory Committee, said last week that the ban on foreign students bringing family members was producing a “much bigger fall than the government expected”.

He said the ban, which came into force in January, could help reduce overall net migration to below 200,000 — even to 150,000 — by the next general election. He cited data from universities showing deposits from international students for courses this September were down by up to 60 per cent.

The 2019 Tory manifesto promised to reduce net migration. At the time it was running at 226,000 but since then net migration has soared to 672,000 in the 12 months to June last year, the latest period for which data is available. The Office for National Statistics is to reveal next week the figures for the year to December last year.

The prime minister’s official spokesman said last week that Sunak wanted to prevent “abuse of our immigration system”. He highlighted official figures showing that more than a quarter of those with graduate visas were not in PAYE employment at any point during the past financial year.

Student brain drain, letters, page 24

Austria to back Britain’s Rwanda deportation plan

Matt Dathan

Austria will formally endorse Britain’s Rwanda deportation scheme as Rishi Sunak visits Vienna to agree closer co-operation between the two countries on tackling illegal migration.

The prime minister will hold talks with Karl Nehammer, the Austrian chancellor, as he becomes the latest European leader to back the concept of the Rwanda scheme.

Nehammer will agree in a face-to-face meeting that schemes such as the UK’s Rwanda plan are needed to tackle illegal migration into Europe.

Last week a letter signed by 15 leaders of EU countries, including Austria, called for new solutions to address illegal migration into Europe, which included the idea of relocating asylum seekers to third countries. Their support for third-country asylum differs from the UK’s Rwanda scheme as they would allow asylum seekers to return to their countries if they were successful in their asylum claims, whereas the UK scheme deports people on one-way flights to Kigali.

The countries that signed the letter last week were Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, the

Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Romania and Finland.

The prime minister will also use the trip to Vienna to announce an extra £25 million for Britain’s National Crime Agency (NCA) to tackle people smuggling operations in the UK and across Europe.

The additional cash is expected to provide new equipment and specialist teams in the NCA, enhance links between the NCA, Home Office and police, and to do more to disrupt small boats supply chains.

The announcement is designed to neutralise Labour’s announcement this month that it would recruit up to 1,000 extra officers, investigators and prosecutors to a Border Security Command centre to combat the small boats crisis.

Speaking before the meeting, Sunak said: “Our disruption of the cruel trade of criminal gangs, together with our Rwanda scheme, are part of a deterrent to stop illegal migration once and for all. It is the British public who should make decisions about who crosses our borders.”

Last week Nehammer wrote on Twitter/X: “We are on the same side in the fight against illegal migration. Asylum procedures in safe third countries outside Europe are a necessity.”

FOR MANY THE BATTLE CONTINUES

A Call-to-Action from Britain's Military Commanders to support Veterans' Mental Health

Those who have served in our Armed Forces have given the best years of their lives to the country and should be proud of their contribution as they transition to a more peaceful life as civilians.

For a small but significant minority that transition is anything but peaceful. Traumatic experiences during their military career can leave them facing serious mental health challenges for years, often decades, after serving. Without help, conditions like complex post-traumatic stress disorder destroy lives and tear families apart.

In the past three years alone, veterans' mental health charity Combat Stress has reported a 44% increase in new referrals from former service men and women seeking treatment for complex mental health conditions arising from military service. These are from the very generation we had the privilege of commanding on exacting operations in the nation's cause.

Veterans reach out to Combat Stress on average 13 years after leaving the military. With operations in Iraq and Afghanistan ending over a decade ago, demand is set to grow.

It comes at a time when the charity, impacted by the cost of living and inflation, is drawing on its reserves to deliver its life-changing treatment to those who need it.

The stark reality is that NHS-led mental health services for veterans are not enough to meet demand. Combat Stress has existed for over 100 years because its specialist services plug a critical gap.

Without support from Combat Stress, many veterans will be left to deteriorate until it's too late. There is a rapidly rising need for veteran mental health services in this country, which requires greater funding, and we are appealing to the nation and the public to play their part in strengthening mental health provision for those who have served this country.

We must all play our part to increase the funding for specialist charities like Combat Stress. By giving financial support or fundraising, you will save lives and families. To help, you can go to combatstress.org.uk/letter.

We have a long and proud history of supporting our military. Now we must fulfil our duty as a nation to support all those who have gone to extraordinary lengths to keep us safe and strong at home, but are now suffering the consequences.

For many the battle continues.

Signed:

General Sir Peter Wall GCB CBE DL
Admiral Sir George Zambellas GCB DSC ADC DL
Admiral Sir Philip Jones GCB ADC DL
General the Lord Houghton of Richmond GCB CBE ADC DL
General the Lord Richards of Herstmonceux GCB CBE DSO DL
Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier GCB CBE DFC
Air Chief Marshal Sir Andy Pulford GCB CBE DL
Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope GCB OBE DL

Patron: HM The King
President: General Sir Peter Wall GCB CBE DL



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Nursery worker guilty of killing baby girl she 'callously persecuted'

Kate Roughley strapped Genevieve Meehan on a beanbag face-down where she suffocated, reports **Mario Ledwith**

The family of a nine-month-old baby who died after being punished by a deputy manager at a nursery have said that they will "never forgive the callousness" of her actions.

Kate Roughley, 37, was found guilty yesterday of causing the death of Genevieve Meehan, who suffocated after being "virtually immobilised" as a punishment. She subjected the baby to an "illogical and disturbing" campaign of hostility at Tiny Toes nursery in Cheadle Hulme, Manchester crown court was told. Genevieve was found unresponsive in May 2022 after Roughley strapped her to a bean bag after days of antagonistic behaviour towards her.

Speaking after the verdict, John Meehan, Genevieve's father, said: "She was entrusted with the care of our daughter yet she put her own convenience and selfish interests above Genevieve's life. She treated our daughter with cruelty and contempt."

Meehan said: "Knowing what she has done, she could have taken responsibility and saved our family from enduring the horror of this trial. However, such a basic act of decency was beyond her. Instead, she has lied, lied and lied throughout and sought to deflect attention to anyone but herself." He criticised her for showing no remorse, saying her "expressions of sorrow... were as insincere as they were insulting."

Meehan added: "It's been over two years since our beautiful and wonderful daughter's life was taken from us. Genevieve's loss has destroyed our family. We long desperately to see her smile and feel her warm embrace."

"For many she was a baby seen on CCTV or discussed in evidence in the trial. But to us she is a precious and wonderful daughter and she is not to be defined by the manner of her death. She was a person who played with her tambourine, ate spaghetti bolognese and played with her big sister. She was kind, infectious and mischievous."

"She was fascinated by this world and everything in it. She loved her life and we loved her instantly. We were amazed every day watching her grow and develop into such an interesting person, bright and talented. We will never accept the cruelty of her life being taken away. She had her whole life to live and was loved so dearly by her family. Her life was full of promise and wonder and it was taken."

Roughley was impassive as the jury returned a unanimous guilty verdict after a five-week trial. She will be sentenced tomorrow. WhatsApp messages sent by Roughley to a friend after the death were ruled inadmissible by the judge, Mrs Justice Ellenbogen. In one, she said: "If I had checked on her the slightest bit earlier, maybe it would be different. I blame myself."

'OUR WORLD TURNED VERY DARK'

When the Meehans dropped Genevieve at the nursery in May 2022, they believed they were leaving her somewhere safe. As Meehan, a barrister, stayed in the car, Katie Meehan walked Genevieve inside. She left with the words: "I love you, sweetie." Within



hours, the child, who had taken her first steps and was babbling the word "dada" in the days before, was dead. She was nine months and 21 days old. From that day, the Meehans said that their "world turned very dark".

It would become clear that the nursery was anything but a sanctuary. Once behind its doors, Genevieve was in the care of Roughley, who had developed a hostility towards her. Rather than nurturing Genevieve, known as Gigi, prosecutors said Roughley subjected her to "illogical and disturbing" animosity. Amid questions about safety standards at Tiny Toes, into which there has been a separate investigation, we examine how Genevieve went for a day of care and never returned home.



John Meehan and his wife, Katie, said they would "never forgive" Roughley

FALLING STANDARDS AT NURSERY

The parents were "obsessive" about sleeping safety. Mrs Meehan, who has an older daughter from a previous relationship, expressed concerns about safety to a male manager during a settling-in session in April 2022, but was reassured all staff had first-aid training.

On its website, Tiny Toes offered guarantees as a "nurturing, caring and dynamic" environment run by experienced staff. "The baby unit is planned so that sensory exploration is linked to their immediate environment and most of all, to ensure that babies feel safe and loved," it read. It was owned by French former amateur racing driver, Franck Pelle, 59, his wife, Karen, 66, and their daughter Grace, 29, through the company Abacus Play Ltd.

On the day Genevieve died there were 11 children in the baby room, with Roughley and an assistant.

CRYPTIC ONLINE MESSAGES

Few staff were more familiar with Tiny Toes than Roughley, who joined aged 18. In 2017, she was appointed deputy manager. She was appointed head of the baby room in 2020 having asked to be more "hands-on". She shared a quote in October 2021 that read: "We're all in the same game, just different levels. Dealing with the same hell, just different devils." On May 4, she shared on her Facebook page a quote that ended "there ain't nobody checking up on me".



Genevieve Meehan was just over nine months old when she died of suffocation after being strapped, face down, on a beanbag by Kate Roughley, a nursery worker, who was found guilty of manslaughter. She will be sentenced tomorrow

mat, Roughley clapped and sang: "Oh Genevieve. Genevieve go home, Genevieve go home, Genevieve." At about 1.30pm, Roughley told a colleague that the child had been awake since that morning and she did not want to "waste a cot" on her. Instead, Genevieve was "banished", wrapped in a blanket and strapped to a bean bag. Another blanket was placed over her. The prosecution said that the child was "virtually immobilised".

The jury was played CCTV of Genevieve thrashing and crying, ignored by Roughley. Wright said she paid only "lip service to her wellbeing, until it was too late". The child fell silent at 2.23pm, moving for the final time a minute later. When Roughley found her unresponsive, with blue lips at 3.12pm, she flipped her over before exclaiming: "S***, she's not breathing." Questioned later, Roughley said she checked on babies "every three to four minutes". This was shown not to be true.

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'I DO FEEL RESPONSIBLE'

Dr Philip Lumb, the pathologist who carried out the post-mortem examination, told jurors that Genevieve died from asphyxiation and pathophysiological stresses brought on by her sleeping arrangements.

Roughley told jurors it was untrue that she harboured dislike towards her. She said she understood it was acceptable to put children on their front after the age of six months, though this was against the nursery's safe-sleeping policy. During her evidence, she described how the events had left a marked impact on her. "There is not a day that goes by when I don't think about it," she said. "I do feel responsible for Genevieve's death given she was in my care that day. However, I don't feel my actions were the cause of the death."

'TOO MANY CHILDREN, NOT ENOUGH STAFF'

Ofsted suspended Tiny Toes's registration immediately after Genevieve's death and the business abandoned an appeal. The company behind the business has been voluntarily wound up.

Questions are being asked about the responsibility borne by those behind the nursery. Sarah Elliott KC, defending Roughley, used her closing speech to point her finger at the Pelles, who she said were "like a family" to Roughley. "There is no sign of them now," she added. Elliott said the family made an "awful lot of money" while paying workers, including Roughley, £11.50 per hour. "Worse than that," she said, "they took on too many children with not enough staff."

Tiny Toes was asked for comment.

GENEVIEWE FOUND UNRESPONSIVE

After being hospitalised for a week in April 2022 with a chest infection, Genevieve was back to her bright and bubbly self by the beginning of May. On the morning of May 9, Mrs Meehan said her daughter was "bright, alert and her normal mischievous self". While collecting Genevieve's sister at 3.15pm, Meehan received a call saying Genevieve had been found unresponsive. He arrived at Stepping Hill Hospital before the ambulance. Inside, medical staff attempted to revive Genevieve but she was pronounced dead at 4.09pm.

'IF YOU KEEP YOURSELF BUSY YOU CAN'T HEAR HER CRYING'

What exactly took place inside the baby room was initially unclear. The reality gradually emerged through the analysis of hours of CCTV footage captured inside. Peter Wright KC, the prosecutor, said that the video showed how Roughley had begun to "persecute" the youngster. Cameras caught her expressing frustration, muttering "vile" at the child, calling her a "stress head" and on another occasion saying: "She's driving me bananas." Wright said: "You allowed your dislike of a nine-month-old child to manifest itself in ill-treatment that you meted out to her."

Roughley was recorded telling a colleague that Genevieve was screaming but "if you keep yourself busy you can't hear her crying". As she cried on a play



Ticklish situation The Duchess of Edinburgh is given a friendly greeting by a terrier called Loki during a visit to the Highland village of Golspie, on the Sutherland coast

AI chatbot that flirts like Scarlett Johansson is silenced

Mark Sellman
Technology Correspondent

The company behind ChatGPT has pulled a voice version of the AI chatbot after users suggested it sounded like the actress Scarlett Johansson.

OpenAI demonstrated Voice Mode last week, in which users could engage in a real-time conversation with the AI. One of the voices was called Sky and acted in a flirtatious way.

The feature had all the hallmarks of the 2013 Spike Jonze film *Her*, in which a lonely writer played by Joaquin Phoenix falls in love with his AI assistant, Samantha, played by Johansson.

OpenAI said that Sky was voiced by an unnamed actress, not Johansson, but it has decided to “pause” its use anyway. Four other AI voices remain.

Sam Altman, OpenAI's chief executive, had deliberately drawn parallels with the Jonze film, tweeting “her” after the launch of Voice Mode.

He has previously cited *Her* as one of his favourite films, telling an audience in San Francisco: “The things *Her* got right, like the whole interaction models of how people use AI, that was incredibly prophetic.”

People had noticed how “flirty” Sky was in the demonstrations. At one point an OpenAI employee tells Sky: “The reason I’m in a really good mood is I’m doing a demonstration of how amazing you are.” The chatbot replies: “Oh stop it, you are making me blush.”

Some were not impressed. Maggie Appleton, a designer, tweeted: “I imagine the least interesting use of GPT-4o [new version of the chatbot] is emulating an uncomfortably flirtatious, mildly condescending woman who you have to actively interrupt if you want to get a word in edgeways.”

It also became the butt of satire, with a segment on the US *Daily Show* in which the female host said: “This is clearly designed to feed dudes’ egos ... you could tell a man built this tech.”

The OpenAI demonstration was designed to showcase its new model, GPT-4o (for omni), which is a faster, “multi-modal” version of the chatbot that has the ability to talk in real time.

Observers were impressed with the development. Ian Hogarth, chair of the UK’s AI Safety Institute, tweeted: “GPT-4o feels like another ChatGPT moment — not the underlying model capabilities, but the leap forward in user experience.”

Last week Google unveiled an AI assistant called Project Astra that could interact with the world around it, being able to spot some lost keys in a room in one demonstration.

Dr Henry Shevlin of the Leverhulme Centre for the Future of Intelligence at Cambridge University, said: “A key feature of AI assistants like ChatGPT is that we interact with them as if they were people rather than just software programs. OpenAI has been leaning into this with the new upgrades to the voice features in ChatGPT, and this ‘anthropomorphism by design’ can be very convenient and intuitive from a user perspective, especially for the majority of people who don’t have much familiarity with contemporary AI tools. “However, it also raises concerns that people may mistakenly attribute human traits to these models, or develop feelings of friendship or even romantic attachment towards them.”

Whistleblower faced ‘racial hostility’ at Tavistock clinic

Tom Witherow

A white consultant psychotherapist claims she faced racial hostility from a director of the Tavistock gender clinic after she raised safeguarding concerns.

Dr Lynne Amidon, 71, said she was signed off work sick with stress after she blew the whistle about “significant neglect” while working for the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust.

She claimed at an employment tribunal in central London that the trust launched a lengthy investigation into her conduct in retaliation for raising concerns 18 times between July 2021 and October 2022.

She was originally told the 18-month investigation would take four weeks, which she called a “deliberate move... to ensure the process is the punishment”.

The inquiry was led by Hector Bayayi, the former clinical operations director at the Tavistock’s Gender Identity Development Service, which was

closed on March 28 this year. In court filings, Amidon has accused him of being “hostile and aggressive” towards her in a July 2022 interview.

During the meeting, Bayayi asked her three times: “What do you think racism is?” She replied that she understood it “to be discrimination based on race or colour”. She has claimed that he “became increasingly aggressive”.

A week later, Amidon was signed off sick and was diagnosed with a disability related to “physical symptoms of stress” caused by the investigation. She is claiming damages for racial discrimination or harassment and the alleged harm she suffered as a whistleblower.

She is still employed by the trust but The Times understands she is seeking to leave her job through redundancy. The investigation led her to undergo “re-education” but formal disciplinary proceedings were not required.

Tavistock has denied the claims, saying it made “genuine attempts” to deal

with her concerns. Bayayi, who will give evidence tomorrow, accepts he made the comments but denies they were racially motivated.

Amidon raised the alarm about cases she was handling as part of a team that prepared reports on families and children involved in social care proceedings for the local authority, Camden council, in north London.

In one case, she claimed a social worker withheld from the family court a letter from a child’s headmaster because it contradicted their view. When it was suggested the social worker’s manager should be notified, Amidon claimed: “The team leader

shrugged this off.” In another case, she said children were “inappropriately” removed from the care of their father.

In January 2022, Amidon and a colleague wrote to Sonia Appleby, the children’s safeguarding lead for Tavistock, warning of a “collective denial” over cases. They wrote: “We are in no doubt that all of the children have been and will be further harmed...”

The Tavistock was embroiled in controversy for the service in which hundreds of children were referred for puberty blockers.

The service was closed shortly before Hilary Cass, the paediatrician hired by NHS England, concluded that “a fundamentally different” model was needed. The hearing continues.



Dr Lynne Amidon
warned of ‘denial’

Mayor’s nightlife tsar sues news site over Covid fraud claim

Alex Farber Media Correspondent

Manchester’s nightlife tsar is suing an independent news website over allegations that he fraudulently secured £400,000 of Covid-19 support.

Sacha Lord has denied the claims, which were published by local website The Mill on Thursday.

Lord, who co-founded The Warehouse Project, a club night promoter,

and Manchester’s Parklife festival has instructed a specialist defamation KC and solicitors to commence legal proceedings against the site’s owners.

“We vehemently disagree with the article and strongly dispute the accuracy, reliability and transparency of its sources,” a spokeswoman for Lord said.

It is alleged that Lord, 52, secured support for his company, Primary Event Solutions, from the govern-

ment’s £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund. The Mill published parts of the application, which states that Primary Event Solutions acted as “the backbone of the national creative events sector”, providing staff for events. But operators named in the application reportedly denied working with the company or said that its role had been overstated.

Arts Council England said that it had found no evidence of misuse of public

funds after a review conducted in response to an allegation of fraud.

Joshi Herrmann, The Mill’s founder, called on Lord to disprove the allegations. “Our reporting is based on five good sources and public filings,” he said.

“I think our readers have the right to consider these serious claims against one of Manchester’s most high-profile businessmen and a close adviser to Andy Burnham.”

TMS

diary@thetimes.co.uk | @timesdiary

The one with a cunning plan

Giving the graduation address to students at New York University, Sir Nick Clegg, right, urged them not to pursue things that make them popular. The Baldric to David Cameron's Blackadder speaks, of course, from experience. The former Lib Dem leader also told them that the news today wasn't as scary as when he was a boy. At prep school in the 1970s, Clegg's class were bluntly told by their history master that they were all going to die from a nuclear strike on London over the Christmas holiday. This terrified them except for a boy from Honolulu who thought he'd have a chance if the teacher was right about the dates. "And as for you," the teacher went on. "There's a major naval base in Hawaii so you'll be burnt to a crisp. And your parents."

Meanwhile, Sir Ed Davey, the latest incarnation of the title character in the popular Lib Dem fantasy series *Leader Who, bragged on Twitter/X*: "After ten years, I am proud to see the second staircase at Surbiton station officially opened." And people say we can't do big infrastructure projects in this country any more.



NEWSHOUND MANQUÉ

A wreath will be laid in Poets' Corner today at a Westminster Abbey service to mark the 40th anniversary of the death of John Betjeman. His career took a turn for the worse after he flopped as a diary reporter on London's Evening Standard in the late 1920s. The story goes that the future poet laureate ran into the office in excitement one day claiming to have "one of those scoop things". His editor asked the eager lad how he knew it was an exclusive. "Well," Betjeman replied, "I rang the Evening News and they said they haven't got it."

MP REGAINS HIS PUN LICENCE

Now that Chris Heaton-Harris has said he is standing down at the next election, the Northern Ireland secretary can return to the role at which he once excelled: cracking puns. The MP for Daventry was famous for little more than making

groaners in his first 12 years in the Commons, but they dried up when he entered the cabinet in 2022. Now perhaps we can again hear from him such gems as "My mate wanted to become a magician but he became disillusioned" or "The best thing about the National Apiarists Convention is all the free bees". What a cabaret talent has been lost to government.

RECKLESS ART CRITICISM

Presenting the prizes at the Royal Society of Portrait Painters summer exhibition under the gaze of Saïd Dai's striking depiction of Theresa May, the art historian Andrew Graham-Dixon reflected on how lucky critics are with politicians in this country. "One time I felt in danger for my life when I was interviewing this 'artist' in Moscow who was favoured by Putin," he said. They came to his bust of the Dear Leader, which Graham-Dixon described as "bronze that he had contrived to resemble Plasticine", and his hosts must have sensed that he was about to let rip on camera, for suddenly the director started making a throat-cutting gesture and he heard the ominous double-click of a soldier loading his rifle. Graham-Dixon decided it best to move on without comment.

PATRICK KIDD

River swims riskier in summer, says Whitty

Clean it up

CAMPAIGN OF THE YEAR

Rhys Blakely Science Correspondent

People may be falling ill after going in rivers even when sewage plants work properly, because they are still releasing harmful bacteria into rivers, according to England's chief medical officer.

Professor Sir Chris Whitty said the plants still let faecal bacteria into waterways even when they are working effectively, and that the risk is higher than normal during spells of good weather.

Measures to reduce the dangers should be a "major priority", he added.

Campaigners have often focused in recent years on untreated waste frequently being dumped from so-called storm overflows, which are meant to operate in bad weather to prevent the sewage system being overwhelmed. However, Whitty pointed out yesterday that treated wastewater is discharged continuously — and that this will also contain "faecal organisms".

"An ordinary, well-working sewage treatment works will still, when effluent goes into the water course, have some viable organisms. They will have gone down a very long way from when they went in but there will still be some available," he said. "And the lower the water, the less they're diluted out. So if you've got a very low river because it's

been dry recently, [and it's] ideal for many children to paddle and people to swim — that is the time when a much higher proportion of the faecal organisms will have come out of a sewage treatment work [in treated waste] rather than out of the storm overflows. So when people are most likely to be using the water, actually the sewage treatment work element can be dominant."

Whitty has contributed a foreword to a report from the Royal Academy of Engineers which concluded that "waste-water treatment must be improved to reduce exposure to human faecal pathogens in treated effluent". It calls for water companies to take maintenance of their infrastructure more seriously, and for better monitoring and publicising of pollution levels in public waters.

It concludes that a government review of bathing water regulations is needed to ensure that "protections are proportionate to the public health risk".

Barbara Evans, professor of public health engineering at the University of Leeds and one of the authors of the report, said: "Investments in sanitation require national vision and leadership; 150 years ago, the UK committed to eliminating cholera and made the necessary huge investments in our wastewater system ... That investment is reaching the end of its life, and we owe it to our children and our grandchildren to make a new commitment and create a vision of a new wastewater system fit for the future."



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Assange wins right to appeal

David Brown

Julian Assange, the Wikileaks founder, has won the right to appeal against extradition to the United States in a ruling by High Court judges.

Assange, 52, is wanted in the US over the publication of hundreds of thousands of leaked documents relating to wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

He claims that the US prosecution would be discriminatory because as an Australian citizen he might not be granted protection under the First Amendment, which respects freedom of speech.

Dame Victoria Sharp, president of the King's Bench Division of the High Court, and Mr Justice Johnson granted leave to appeal on those points. A date has not been set for the appeal hearing.

The judges said there was an arguable case that Assange could be discriminated against after being told an American prosecutor had said the First Amendment might not cover foreigners in matters of national security.

Assange, who has had mental and physical health problems diagnosed, was not present for the hearing. His wife, Stella, attended while hundreds of supporters gathered outside, including Jeremy Corbyn, the former Labour leader, John McDonnell, the former shadow chancellor, and the Labour MP Apsana Begum.

Campaigners said Assange could have been forced on to a flight to America within 24 hours if the ruling had gone against him. They cheered as the result was confirmed.

Mrs Assange, who spoke outside the Royal Courts of Justice after the announcement, said the judges "reached the right decision" and called on the US to drop the case. She added: "This case is shameful and it is taking an enormous toll on Julian. He is under enormous pressure. He has been in Belmarsh prison for over five years — it's been two years since the order was issued.

"The case should be abandoned. The Biden administration should have dropped it from day one,



Stella Assange outside the Royal Courts of Justice. She demanded that the US drop the case against her husband, Julian

but now is a right moment for the administration to drop it.

"We are relieved as a family that the courts took the right decision today but how long can this go on for? Our eldest son just turned seven.

"All their memories of their father are in the visiting hall of Belmarsh prison. As the case goes along, it becomes clearer and clearer to everyone that Julian is in prison for doing good journalism, for exposing corruption, for exposing the violations on innocent people in abusive wars for which there is impunity."

In February the High Court gave US officials 51 days to offer assurance that Assange would not face a death

penalty and had the right to freedom of speech or the extradition case would go to a full appeal hearing.

A diplomatic note sent by the US embassy in London to the Foreign Office last month stated that Assange would "have the ability to raise and seek to rely upon at trial ... protection under the First Amendment". It also stated that he was "not charged ... and will not be tried for a death-eligible offence".

Edward Fitzgerald KC, counsel for Assange, said he was no longer raising the issue of a potential death penalty. He said the US had made an "unambiguous executive promise not to charge any capital offence".

Fitzgerald said concern remained over whether Assange could rely on the right to freedom of speech in the American constitution's First Amendment.

He said there was no promise from the embassy that Assange would not be denied protection because he is a foreigner. He added the guarantee should

state that Assange was "permitted" to rely on the right to freedom of speech, rather than "seek to" use the right.

James Lewis KC, counsel for the US government, said in a written submission: "As in the United Kingdom the executive cannot bind the courts, who are the final determiners of domestic law, on an issue of constitutional law or legal interpretation. That is not to say the judiciary will do other than take solemn notice and give effect so far as they are able to a promise given by the executive, particularly in relation to international relationships."

Assange has been in custody at Belmarsh prison, southeast London, since April 2019.

He was arrested after he was expelled from the Ecuadorian embassy, where he lived as a fugitive for seven years to avoid extradition to Sweden on sexual assault charges, which he denied, and which he believed were a pretext to send him to the US.

War zone where eagles won't dare

Tom Whipple Science Editor

The spring 2022 migration of Denisa, the greater spotted eagle, was more eventful than usual.

Flying north through Ukraine near Kyiv, the bird — whose only usual worry is picking off a tasty frog — was rocked by battlezone explosions and changed her flight plan. Then with the amphibians of Belarus tantalisingly close, she sat it out while the Russians were pushed back to the border. Finally, hungry and tired, she made it to her destination, the wetlands of Polesia.

Like all other eagles migrating from the eastern Mediterranean via Ukraine since the war began, Denisa took longer, flew further and used more energy. According to Charlie Russell, an ecologist from the University of East Anglia who tracks bird migrations, when the bird at last reached the frog-rich wetlands "she was knackered".

Data gathered by Russell, the British Trust for Ornithology and the Estonian University of Life Sciences reveals what happens when birds' migration routes cross a war zone. There are situations where, it turns out, eagles won't dare.

Russell said it also revealed another cost of the conflict: the birds have to push themselves to the limit on what is an already-draining journey.

The findings, published in the journal *Current Biology*, come from the researchers' study of greater spotted eagles, which has followed migrations since 2018. "We never expected to be tracking the birds through an active conflict zone," Russell said. When Russia invaded, he had been planning a field trip to Polesia, the vast wetlands on the Belarus-Ukraine border. Instead he had to follow the migration via his computer screen in Britain.

The study, published in the journal *Current Biology*, looked at 19 birds and found they travelled an average of 85km further, took more than two days longer, and stopped less at their refuelling sites. But every eagle is different. At the same time as President Zelensky was refusing to evacuate Kyiv, another strong bird had the same sentiment and defied Putin. Russell said: "One bird normally migrates across the centre of Kyiv and it did exactly the same thing, through very intense conflict events."



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Sympathy for a loser turned megalomaniac

Film Kevin Maher

The Apprentice
Cannes Film Festival
★★★★☆

This is the Donald Trump movie that you never knew you needed: full of compassionate feeling yet ruthless in analysis.

The setting is New York in the 1970s and early 1980s, the material is “based on real events” and our subject is a socially gauche property speculator, played by the Marvel star Sebastian Stan (he was the Winter Soldier) in a transformative performance.

It is difficult to overstate how nuanced Stan is here and how his portrait of Trump evolves in physical gestures and familiar mannerisms (saying “loser”) without becoming an Alec Baldwin-style caricature. If there's any problem with Stan's iteration of Trump, especially in the early sequences, it's that he's almost too sympathetic, much like Josh Brolin's gentle George W Bush in Oliver Stone's *W*.

The film's title is a queasy pun referencing Trump's business-themed reality show but also acknowledging a key figure in the future president's early life: the McCarthyite commie-hunter and New York fixer Roy Cohn, played by *Succession*'s Jeremy Strong. Strong too

is extraordinary, employing his unblinking hangdog stare and coiled intensity to devastating effect.

Strong is not just Trump's mentor but his surrogate father and great protector. One of the film's standout scenes features Cohn and the cruel family patriarch Fred Trump (Martin Donovan) trading coded blows over the right and wrong ways to motivate young Donald. It is ultimately Cohn who inspires Trump with the business strategies — later imported into his political career — of attack, deny and never, ever admit defeat.

Sympathy for the Donald, however, only lasts so long and, as his shady business deals continue and his vanity metastasises, the formerly hollow man is consumed by his own megalomania. The toxicity of his vanity is underscored by the film's most controversial scene where, during a heated argument with Ivana (Maria Bakalova), she ridicules his weight gain and thinning



Maria Bakalova, at Cannes, left, plays Ivana Trump alongside Sebastian Stan, who gives a nuanced performance as Donald Trump

hair. In response, he pushes her to the floor and rapes her.

The film is directed by the brilliant Iranian-Danish film-maker Ali Abbasi (*Border*, *Holy Spider*) and perhaps it required the pitiless perspective of a non-American to tackle this subject so unapologetically. He slowly shifts the heart of the film towards Cohn, especially in the 1980s, when the once lethal lawyer with multiple male partners is professionally barred and becomes HIV positive. It's all cleverly shot through a time-appropriate visual sheen — blurry and faded for the 1970s, a stark VHS patina for the 1980s.

It ends on a chilling note and a weary acknowledgement that the most powerful man on the planet might soon be, once again, well, this loser.

In cinemas later this year

Nightmares could indicate lupus

Poppy Koronka
Health Correspondent

An increase in nightmares or day-time hallucinations could be an indicator of autoimmune diseases such as lupus, scientists have said.

Researchers from the University of Cambridge and King's College London found that disrupted sleep, nightmares and hallucinations also preceded a “flare-up” of lupus — where symptoms got worse — in the majority of the patients they surveyed.

Three in five lupus patients surveyed reported disrupted dream sleep many years before the onset of other lupus symptoms.

Just under 25 per cent of patients reported having hallucinations during the day, which for 85 per cent did not occur until other symptoms had also started.

Lupus is an autoimmune condition affecting up to 50,000 people in the UK. The disease occurs when the body's immune system attacks itself, causing a diverse range of possible symptoms.

There is no cure for the condition, but it can be treated with anti-inflammatory medicine and steroids.

The researchers said that these findings could allow patients to recognise lupus flares earlier, allowing them to seek treatment early.

This “early warning system” could also help clinicians improve care, the researchers said, adding that earlier treatment could even help reduce waiting times in lupus clinics.

In the study, published today in *eClinicalMedicine*, researchers surveyed 676 people living with lupus and 400 clinicians.

Dr Melanie Sloan, from Cambridge university's department of public health and primary care, the lead author of the study, said: “It's important that clinicians talk to their patients about these types of symptoms and spend time writing down each patient's individual progression of symptoms.”

“Patients often know which symptoms are a bad sign that their disease is about to flare, but both patients and doctors can be reluctant to discuss mental health and neurological symptoms — particularly if they don't realise that these can be a part of autoimmune diseases.”

The researchers also conducted detailed interviews with 69 people with various autoimmune conditions

and 50 clinicians. The dreams reported were often distressing, and involved being attacked, trapped, crushed or falling.

One patient from Ireland said of their nightmares: “Horrific, like murders, like skin coming off people, horrific ... I think it's like when I'm overwhelmed, which could be the lupus being bad ... So I think the more stress my body is under, then the more vivid and bad the dreaming would be.”

Professor David D'Cruz from King's College London, a senior author on the study, said: “For many years, I have discussed nightmares with my lupus patients and thought that there was a link with their disease activity.”

“This research provides evidence of this, and we are strongly encouraging more doctors to ask about nightmares and other neuropsychiatric symptoms — thought to be unusual, but actually very common in systemic autoimmune — to help us detect disease flares earlier.”

The research, funded by The Lupus Trust, is part of the Inspire project (investigating neuropsychiatric symptom prevalence and impact in rheumatology patient experiences).

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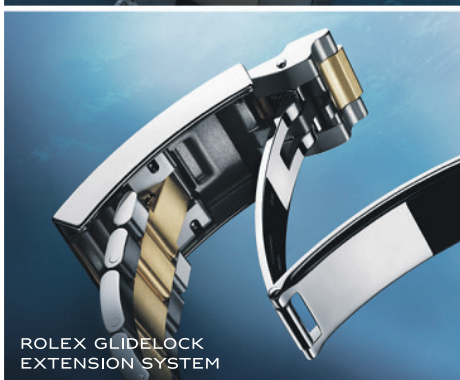
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It'd be better with Boris?

This myth won't fly

Hugo Rifkind

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Comment

Three stages that will reveal the real Starmer

The Labour leader's true political character will only emerge in office — and it may surprise supporters and even himself

William Hague



'Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely,' was the famous observation of Lord Acton in 1887, but just as true is the regular refrain of Robert Caro, the great biographer of Lyndon B Johnson: power always reveals. In power there is nowhere to hide the qualities or weaknesses of a leader; power illuminates mercilessly their ideals, stamina, work ethic, morals, persuasiveness and instincts. "Power reveals," says Caro. "It doesn't always reveal you for the better, but it reveals."

It is power, in Caro's chosen period, that reveals LBJ as a master legislator of the Great Society but an appalling war leader over Vietnam, or John F Kennedy as a brilliant statesman but an indifferent persuader of Congress, or Richard Nixon as a world-class strategist but a crook.

In Britain, only power revealed the immense abilities of Churchill or the inadequacies of Eden, his eventual successor. Dwelling on most recent prime ministers would take up the whole of this page. Their record, however, bears out the truth: power may sometimes corrupt, but it always reveals.

Polls suggest that in the coming months Sir Keir Starmer has a high chance of being in power. If he is indeed installed in Downing Street with a working majority, he can expect to be there securely for some years — Labour is skilled in making life difficult for prime ministers but entirely untrained in the Tory art of

removing them. How he will perform when tested in office is therefore of huge importance. You can listen attentively to his rolled-up sleeves presentation last week, study his six election pledges and peer hard into his personality, but what he will really be like in power will only be revealed after he enters No 10.

I mean that more as a historical observation than a hostile statement. Crises in power have frequently revealed leaders to be different from the expectations of their followers. Ramsay MacDonald's transformation from a radical, working-class leader to presiding over cuts in the dole in the National Government is a classic. Harold Wilson and Ted Heath both changed course sharply from their election commitments when an economic crunch arrived. Margaret Thatcher astonished everyone by doubling down on her policies when a crisis came, revealing in full strength the different metal

A new PM must know where they're going on all issues or drift sets in

of which she was made.

We do know that Starmer is ruthless — the fate of Jeremy Corbyn and hard left parliamentary candidates is testament to that. We also know he is disciplined, doggedly sticking to chosen messages and closing down inconvenient issues wherever possible. And we have abundant evidence that he is cautious, approving election pledges among which some are underwhelming and others happening anyway. That's as far as it goes. He is particularly good at not giving much else away.

Being ruthless, disciplined and

cautious is a strong combination when leading an opposition party with a recent history of being chaotic and overexcited. However many interviews he gives in the election campaign, however many questions he is asked and however many debates he takes part in, that is all we are going to know, all the way to election night. This is the great advantage for him of being — yes — ruthless, disciplined and cautious.

It is only after that, if he indeed is elected, that power will reveal him, and it will do so in three stages. The first stage is the revelation of whether momentum and coherence can be given to a new government in its opening weeks. Since this involves making big decisions almost immediately it is an entirely different experience from running the opposition. Labour is committed to many fundamental policy reviews — on defence, planning, parental leave, the school curriculum — and would need a comprehensive spending review at the same time.

That's a very convenient posture for an opposition, with all those issues parked for the election, but unless an incoming PM has a strong view of where every review should end up, they would become bogged down in Whitehall. If Starmer doesn't know where he is going on each issue, drift will soon set in. This week's report from the Tony Blair Institute set out a good plan to transform the public sector with new technology and AI, but with a long list of actions for the first 100 days of a new government. In office, caution would no longer be enough for Starmer. There would either be momentum with all its attendant risks, or interminable reviews with incompatible outcomes. Only power will reveal which.

Then will come the second

LEON NEAL/GETTY IMAGES



Sir Keir Starmer would face high voter, union and public sector expectations

revelation, the crucial choice of what to do when there is no spare money. It is possible that a new government could be lucky, inheriting growth picking up and inflation staying low. But the expectations of voters, trade unions and the public sector will be high, as will the soaring need for spending on health, social care and defence. Most tax increases have been ruled out. Financial markets will watch every move.

When money runs out, does Keir Starmer tighten spending, face down the unions and defy his party or does he raise all the taxes he can? In crude terms, is he a secret Tory or a secret socialist? We don't know, although he is a secret something, possibly inclined to a mixture of the two. He might not know himself, or not want to think about it, but power will certainly reveal the answer — an

answer that would define him more than anything except the third stage.

This third revelation is how a leader responds to the totally unexpected crisis: war, pandemic, social disorder, financial meltdown. It is the lonely moment when MacDonald decides to break with his party, Wilson to devalue the pound, Thatcher to send a task force to the Falklands, Blair to join an invasion of Iraq — moments the country never forgets. This is when power most brutally unveils the true personality of the person in charge, sometimes to the astonishment of those around them.

The past four years have brought Covid-19, two major wars, intensifying superpower rivalry, growing migration and accelerating climate change. It is almost inconceivable that the next few years will not bring very serious and unforeseen events. A prime minister's gut instinct — really a mixture of personality and calculation but very personal to them — is then decisive. What they do is not only a revelation to the country, but very often themselves.

We can prod and probe all we like in the coming weeks, but it is unlikely that we will discover the true nature, encouraging or otherwise, of the Labour leader in office. Limited pledges and extensive reviews will be the pattern from now to polling day. But if elected he will need to know his own mind very quickly. Power alone will reveal whether he really does.

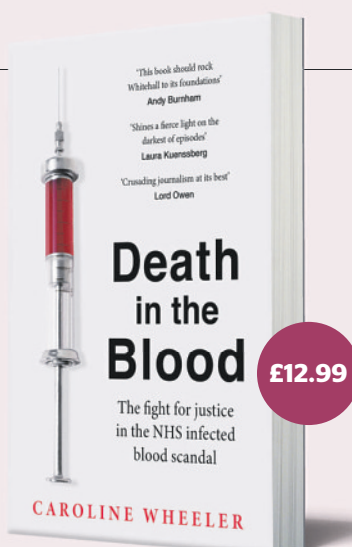
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Comment

Wickedly perverse move should sink the ICC

The arrest warrant for Israel's PM subverts justice and finally destroys the court's reputation

Melanie Phillips



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The decision by the International Criminal Court prosecutor, Karim Khan, to request arrest warrants for Israel's prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, and its minister of defence, Yoav Gallant, is a wickedly perverse and deeply troubling move.

Khan has also requested arrest warrants for Yahya Sinwar, head of Hamas in Gaza, Mohammed Deif, commander-in-chief of Hamas's military wing, and Ismail Haniyeh, head of Hamas's political bureau. He has accused the Hamas leaders of murder, extermination, torture and rape which are crimes against humanity, and of taking Israelis hostage, which are war crimes.

Khan presents this as a display of even-handedness. This itself is morally bankrupt. There can be no equivalence between a genocidal attempt at extermination and a country's defence against it.

The accusations against the Hamas trio are based on factual evidence. Those against the Israelis are wholly without foundation. Khan accuses them of starving Gaza's civilians, wilfully killing them, intentionally attacking those queuing for food and obstructing delivery of humanitarian aid. He says Israel has "intentionally and systematically" deprived Gaza's

civilians of objects indispensable to human survival through "the imposition of a total siege over Gaza that involved completely closing the three border crossing points ... for extended periods".

But the very opposite is the case. There has been no "total siege". Since the beginning of the war, according to Israeli statistics, 18,255 trucks have crossed from Israel into Gaza carrying 399,580 tons of food, 59,660 tons of shelter equipment and 23,110 tons of medical supplies.

It is Hamas that has been obstructing the delivery of aid and stealing civilian supplies for its own use and to sell on the black market at inflated prices, from which it is

This is from the Salem school of law: verdict first, evidence nowhere

estimated to have made some \$500 million, according to an analyst at the Washington Institute and supported by Shin Bet, Israel's domestic security agency. When Israel has opened fire around the aid trucks it has been against Hamas terrorists trying to steal their cargo.

Even more astoundingly Khan makes no mention of Egypt, which also has a border with Gaza. Yet Egypt has sealed that border and refuses to let any aid supplies through at all.

The claim that Israel's defence forces have been wilfully killing Gaza's civilians is also the opposite of the truth. The civilian death figures produced by the Hamas-run health ministry and recycled by the UN have

been grossly inflated. After experts pointed out they were statistically impossible, the health ministry slashed them — admitting that some had been taken from the media.

Two weeks ago, the UN quietly followed suit and halved its own totals. Since the Israelis estimate they have killed about 14,000 terrorists, they have killed approximately one civilian for every combatant. This is a vastly lower proportion of civilians killed than has ever been achieved by any other country in warfare. The Israelis have taken more care not to kill civilians than any other country. Yet astoundingly, they are being accused of crimes against humanity.

The people who really have exposed Gaza's civilians to danger are the Hamas terrorists, who have used them as human shields and cannon fodder by siting missiles and the infrastructure of warfare among apartment blocks, schools and hospitals. These are real war crimes against Gaza's civilians, which Khan doesn't even mention.

Khan has relied for his evidence on claims made by partisan "human rights" groups who oppose Israel's existence and have been defaming it with lies that have inflamed protests and attacks on Jews across the world. He says that the evidence against Israel has been supplied by "multiple witnesses interviewed by my office, including local and international medical doctors". But many of those doctors have been exposed as Hamas operatives or sympathisers.

Khan has also driven a coach and horses through the fundamental precept of the ICC. This holds that

the court may only exercise jurisdiction where national legal systems fail to do so, and it must give a state time to investigate any claims that have been made against it. Yet Khan has issued his arrest warrants without even asking Israel to investigate his charges. And since the war in Gaza is still under way, that is clearly not yet possible.

Defensively, Khan says he has consulted an "impartial" panel. Yet it is stuffed with radical "human rights" lawyers who are no friends of Israel. This "impartial" panel is actually a hanging jury from the Salem school of law: verdict first, evidence nowhere.

The reputation of the court, which was all but wrecked by Khan's two incompetent and deeply partisan predecessors, has been hanging by a thread. Far from restoring it, Khan's move will now bury it in the eyes of all fair-minded and decent people. It will also hammer a nail into the coffin of human rights law, the legal instrument of the international "humanitarian" establishment of the UN and anti-Israel non-governmental organisations for which this kind of "lawfare" has become a principal weapon aimed at Israel's destruction.

Doubtless under enormous pressure from both the UN and his former chums in Britain's radical barrister sets, Khan's preposterous move is part of the agenda for Israel's destruction through a pincer movement of genocidal terror, brainwashed street insurrection and "human rights" lawfare. The beneficiary will be Hamas; the victims will be Israel, the rule of law and civilisation itself.



Freedom of press depends on closing this dark loophole

Owen Meredith

In today's uncertain and dangerous world it is critical for leading democracies such as the UK to stand up for our way of life, including promoting the freedom of the press. Section 40 of the Crime and Courts Act was dreamt up in the wake of the Leveson inquiry to try to force publishers into a system of state-backed press regulation. It has been sitting on the statute books for more than a decade but has never — for good reason — been brought into force.

If enacted, this pernicious legislation would force publishers to pay both sides' costs in court actions, win or lose, creating a barrier to justice. So even if a publisher won the action — because the court was satisfied that the article was true, had been lawfully published, was in the public interest, and that the publisher, editor and reporters had all acted lawfully — the publisher would still have to pay the losing claimant's costs and its own.

Section 40 is anathema to press freedom and, by extension, democracy. It would constitute an undemocratic attack on free speech which would have a chilling effect on reporting on matters of public interest. It would exacerbate the wave of spurious legal claims from the rich and powerful, amounting to state sanctioning of strategic lawsuits against public participation (Slapps). The government committed in its 2017 and 2019 election manifestos to repeal Section 40, and is to deliver that mandate through provisions in the Media Bill, which will be debated in the House of Lords tomorrow.

By giving their unequivocal backing to repeal, peers have an opportunity to send a clear message to repressive regimes overseas that the UK stands squarely behind freedom of speech.

Ahead of that debate, a group of UK-based and international press freedom and journalism organisations, including the Committee to Protect Journalists, Reporters Without Borders, English Pen and Global Witness, have published a statement welcoming the UK government's intent to repeal the legislation.

These organisations say ridding our statute books of Section 40 will strengthen the UK's reputation as a global champion for democracy and demonstrate the importance of free speech with no strings attached. We urge peers and political parties of all colours to unite behind the repeal of Section 40 tomorrow.

The UK faces a general election this year. One of the first acts of the next government must be to give a firm and unequivocal commitment to press freedom. We must never go down the dark and dangerous road that Section 40 represents again.

Owen Meredith is chief executive of the News Media Association

Giles Coren Notebook

Sorry, Tesco: fancy cheese is mostly fit for the bin

There was a whiffy wave of excitement across the food press yesterday when Tesco reported "hugely increased" demand for "gourmet" cheeses such as Comté, Ossau-Iraty, Morbier and Chaource, and scoff hacks decided to run with the notion that cheese is having a moment.

Rubbish. At the cutting edge of gastronomy, as opposed to the aisles of the country's biggest supermarket chain, quite the opposite is true. I have not seen a cheese trolley in an English restaurant since 2010. The very fact that Tesco is up to the eyeballs in rare French stinkies shows you that nobody with any class is buying them any more, so they've ended up piled high in the national bargain fridge like so many curly old Jeffrey Archers in the window of Help the Aged.

Nobody eats cheese now because a superfluous dose of fat, salt and mould at the end of a meal is the

nutritional equivalent of hitting yourself in the face with a mallet before going to bed. It was only invented as something to help you finish off the last of the claret before moving on to pudding and stickies. But now that nobody under 35 drinks alcohol, cheese has no role to fill.

I got my first food-writing gig 30 years ago because, having lived for some time in Paris, round the corner from a famous fromagerie in Le Marais, I could identify on sight at least 100 of the cheeses that used to grace the groaning trolleys that were wheeled round London's restaurants after the mains. It was the closest thing to "expertise" you could get in food writing and I had it in spades. But in a modern meal in which protein, fibre and fat are carefully balanced in the name of girth, gut health and sleep hygiene, salty rotted cow juice bought from a shop doesn't get a look in.

I do sympathise with Tesco's problem. We've all opened the fridge or larder and gone, "Who bought all this bloody

cheese? What on earth are we going to do with it?" But instead of trying to persuade us poor customers that it's the hip new ingredient for the cool set, I suggest they do what the rest of us do with a cheese glut: make a fondue. And when nobody fancies that much, toss it.

War games

A gushing letter to Adolf Hitler from Pierre de Coubertin has emerged in which the French founder of the modern Olympics praises the magnificent success of the 1936 Berlin games and expresses his admiration for the Führer. With the Paris Olympics only weeks away and local enthusiasm for the spectacle reportedly low, especially among the elderly, this piece of news should be just the fillip Parisians need to get right behind it.

Big one

My daughter Kitty enjoyed reading Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* over the weekend, so I took her to the Owl Bookshop in Kentish Town to load up on more of

his books for half term. Personally, I loved his early stuff, but after *The Unconsoled* it all went a bit YA for me, making books like *The Buried Giant*, *Klara and the Sun* and, of course, *NLNG* perfect for a middling-to-bright 13-year-old.

"He's really good," Kitty said last night, looking up from the first few pages of *Klara*.

"That's why they gave him the Nobel prize," I said.

"Which one?" asked Kitty.

"Er, the literature one," I replied, to her apparent disappointment. Because to her mind, I guess, the peace prize is where the glory lies. And I had a brief vision of how jolly it would be if the Nobel prize followed the model of the old Whitbread/Costa awards, so that after winning for literature, chemistry, medicine or whatever, everyone went through to the next round for a crack at "the big one".

Short-changed, again

In a story headlined "Barristers charging full fee for short virtual hearings", *The Times* reported yesterday that "dishonest and greedy barristers are cashing in on remote hearings by charging a full day's fee despite wrapping up their submissions quickly". Disgusting. Highly paid professionals expecting to be paid in full for work they haven't even





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It'd be better with Boris? This myth won't fly

Tories suggesting that the party was wrong to get rid of Johnson are setting it up for another generation of infighting

Hugo Rifkind



@HUGORIFKIND

Ah, there it is. What joy! The first unashamed outing, into the wild, of an argument I can clearly foresee enraging me for the rest of my life. Thank you, Nadhim Zahawi, for getting this out of the way. "I wish we had held our nerve," the former, albeit short-lived, chancellor told *The Sunday Times*. "Many colleagues got spooked."

He was talking about his party's defenestration of a chap called Boris Johnson, whom you may still, dimly, remember. "I cannot think of a more consequential prime minister of his generation." With Zahawi's strong and reported implication having been that the Conservatives, right now, would be better off if Johnson were still there.

You won't believe who agrees with him. Ha! Just kidding. Of course you will. Although helpfully, the *Daily Express* phoned them all, just to check. For an article headlined "Tories back Nadhim Zahawi as he admits ousting Boris Johnson was a mistake" they canvassed Sir Michael

Fabricant, Sir Jacob Rees-Mogg and Nadine Dorries, all of whom agreed that this was where the rot had begun. Anyone else? Why yes! Dame Andrea Jenkyns! House! She put it best of all. "Ousting Boris Johnson was a short-sighted mistake," she said, "echoing the missteps of those who turned against Margaret Thatcher."

There you have it. The defining myth of the Tory right, for the next generation. "Ah, but if only we hadn't ditched Boris! A mistake up there with abandoning Maggie!" No matter that the Maggie myth has never made sense, and not only because John Major won the 1992 election. The notion that it would still have been better to keep Thatcher anyway seems logically to rest on believing

Pincher scandal led to 50 ministers resigning. Thatcher faced one

that five years later, by now 72 years old and in her 22nd year of leading the Conservatives, she would have trounced a young chap called Tony Blair. Which, I would venture, is a bit of a punt.

Tangentially, if Johnson was still there it's reasonable to wonder whether Zahawi would be, too. He was sacked by Rishi Sunak, remember, over a multimillion-

pound tax dispute that he hadn't declared, even as chancellor, in breach of the ministerial code. Most other PMs would also have sacked him for that, though most other PMs weren't Johnson. You may recall two other particular occasions when ethics advisers had told Johnson people may have been in breach of the ministerial code. And on both those occasions, you may further recall, the only person to leave their job was the ethics adviser.

It is the stuff of pub quizzes, already, that the scandal which brought Johnson down was not even one of his own, but that of the handy whip Chris Pincher. Johnson initially ignored allegations against him, leading to 50 ministerial resignations. For context, this is 49 more resignations than the single one (Sir Geoffrey Howe) that precipitated the end of Thatcher. If the Pincher pretext is often forgotten, that's only because there were so many other scandals jostling to take Johnson's scalp instead. To believe in a world in which Johnson remains PM is not only to forget about everything from his wallpaper to Jennifer Arcuri to partygate. (For the last of those, he only avoided being suspended from parliament for 90 days because he quit first.) It's also hard to believe that between July 2022 and now, almost two years, there would have been no more

whopping great scandals to follow them. Do you? Does anyone?

For a counterfactual I can get on board with, let's ponder a parallel reality in which Johnson had never arrived. Go back. It's 2016. David Cameron has either just won the Brexit referendum or not had to bother with one at all. So, what happens next?

Certainly, there's no 2017 election. With a majority of ten, and another ten Ulster Unionists, Cameron

The consequences are not just Brexit but also May, Truss and Sunak

probably rides it out to 2020, bang in the middle of Covid. Then what? "The world is frightening, fragile and falling apart," thinks Britain, "so what we want now is a government led by Jeremy Corbyn." You reckon? Because I'm not seeing it.

There's also the question of whether a Cameron government, ten solid years in, would have dealt with the pandemic any better than a Johnson one, perennially at war with every aspect of the British state and staffed entirely by people chosen for their willingness to tow the line over Brexit. On that, we can only guess. But my guess is yes.

Probably, Cameron wouldn't still

be there. Eventually he'd have been replaced, perhaps by his chosen successor George Osborne but equally possibly, after a vicious leadership battle, by Johnson himself. The cost of living crisis would still have happened. Most likely, Sir Keir Starmer would still be the future, and the Conservatives a miserable mess. But I do not and will not and cannot believe that they would be more of a mess than they are now.

Think about their aura today of mendacity and uselessness. Think about the cast of characters, the rhetorical extremism, the abandonment of the centre ground. Think about how all that began. Sure, he won an election once, and resoundingly, but only because he'd already smashed a Boris Johnson-shaped hole into our politics. Although then, rather than filling it, he fell in it.

In a way, Zahawi is absolutely right. Johnson is, indeed, the most consequential PM of his generation. His consequences include not only Brexit but also the governments of Theresa May, Liz Truss and Sunak, too. They include a lot. And honestly and truly, you're going to tell me that getting rid of him was where it all started to go wrong? Getting rid of him? Getting rid of him? This is the myth you want to build? Dear God, it's going to be a long few decades. Give me strength.

Letters to the Editor



Student brain drain

Sir, Further to your report "East End pupils heading west for top US universities" (May 20), Harvard's annual undergraduate fees are \$56,550, and most of its students pay them. No wonder, then, that Harvard can afford a scholarship programme that cherry-picks the best and brightest from across the world. In contrast to English universities with a very specialised BA degree, Scottish universities offer the four-year MA as first degree and have a similar curriculum to the US, offering a broad range of subjects in the first two years, only to specialise in the last two. Harmanpreet Garcha could have chosen a Scottish MA for a broader education than she can get in England. Yet Scottish universities subsidise every home (Scottish) undergraduate student because they are far from being paid the full cost of their education, while the hostile migration policies towards international students strangle them even more. This has led to a university crisis worse than in England as Scottish universities can only dream of government funding of £9,250 per student. If UK university education received similar funding to that of US universities, no talented UK student would have to seek scholarships abroad.

Professor Karin Friedrich
University of Aberdeen

Virtual hearings

Sir, Further to your report "Barristers 'charging full fee for short virtual hearings'" (May 20), there is no evidence that barristers are acting dishonestly beyond the view of one survey respondent. Most barristers are in favour of remote hearings but want the system to work better. For this reason the Bar Council is calling for further investment to improve court technology and proper monitoring and analysis of remote hearings to ensure that remote justice is done and is seen to be done.

Sam Townend KC
Chair of the Bar Council

Free vintage drinks

Sir, I too was disappointed to read of Anne Treneman's wasted liqueurs (letters, May 20). When my father died my mother threw a party to use up the contents of his drinks cabinet. After sampling the various bottles the guests were invited to take any they fancied home. Needless to say, the party was a roaring success and the cabinet was empty by the end of the evening.

Daphne Boyle
Teddington

Corrections and clarifications

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Letters to the Editor should be sent to letters@thetimes.co.uk or by post to 1 London Bridge Street, London SE1 9GF

Rogue cyclists and improving road safety

Sir, Edward Lucas may be right to condemn the behaviour of aggressive cyclists ("It's high time rogue cyclists were humbled", May 20). But he implicitly exculpates road-planners, whose every new wheeze is calculated to encourage them. Floating bus stops do not just naively suppose riders will give way, they embody a message that cyclists are more important than other road users. A bus stop built out into the road means that when a bus stops, every other vehicle is physically forced to stop too, there being no space to pass — except for cyclists, who get a special priority lane, one that reinforces dangerous undertaking behaviour.

We are continually told by the transport authorities, both in the configuration of new road schemes and in "active travel" propaganda, that cyclists have special status. It should be no surprise, then, that some take it that their convenience outweighs any consideration of others.

Guy Herbert
London NW1

Sir, Further to Edward Lucas's article, there are at least eight regulatory requirements and laws applicable to

motorists and their vehicles but none of them, such as the requirement for insurance, are applicable to cyclists and their bikes, including the dockless cycles that are blighting London's roads and pavements. Drivers and cyclists have to stop at a red light, but whereas the former can be photographed and fined automatically via their number plate and registration, cyclists cannot.

Regarding the dockless cycle outfits such as Lime and Forest, I asked Lambeth council months ago how much these companies paid to the council for their licences to operate in the borough, and who was responsible for insurance if the bikes caused a serious accident, such as someone tripping over a bike left on the pavement in the dark. No response.

As a campaigner in Melanie Phillips's comment article (May 7) concluded, the government has run scared from the cycling lobby. Local authorities may have done the same.

Alan Chapman
London SE1

Sir, As a pedestrian, cyclist and motorist I don't know why people are so put out when a cyclist goes

through a red light. Traffic lights were not invented because cyclists required them and in some more enlightened cycling countries it is accepted that bikes go ahead at traffic lights, which is much safer for them. If the cyclist got off and pushed through a red light then no one would have anything to say about it, so why not pedal through if it is safe to do so.

Anna Webster
Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancs

Sir, As I have a bell on my bicycle, which I am happy to use, I am not eligible for the Rev Robin Hungerford's no-bell prize (letter, May 20). However, in the interests of balance, perhaps there should be a similar prize for people ambling in country lanes who are oblivious to all external sound on account of being plugged into their smartphones.

Callum Beaton
St Martin's, Guernsey

Sir, The lane I live on is regularly used by groups of cyclists. The cyclist at the front can usually be heard shouting: "Pothole, pothole!"

Roger Foord
Chorleywood, Herts

Idealistic youth and the Gaza protests

Sir, In her characteristically powerful piece on the Gaza protests ("Don't scorn students for believing in a cause", May 18), Janice Turner asks "what is wrong with students being society's nagging conscience?" I can think of three answers: their insistence on imposing their protest on others whose studies or degree ceremonies are obstructed; the hatred and aggression of so many of the students towards those who do not share their views or who just happen to be Jewish; and the blind failure to recognise the evil of Hamas and its contribution to the appalling plight of the Palestinian people.

Lord Pannick KC
Blackstone Chambers, Temple

Sir, Janice Turner reminisces about her student generation of the early 1980s embracing the numerous fashionable causes of the day and rejecting rational arguments against them. The student group of which I was part in the 1960s deeply researched, protested and campaigned for the single cause of religious freedom, which in theory was guaranteed to citizens of the

Soviet Union by its constitution but in practice was denied to them, and worse. Our generation regarded our presence at university as a privilege, disturbed nobody, alienated almost nobody and won much attention and support (including that of Bernard Levin). Our activism influenced the global development of currents of opinion that ultimately served to achieve our objectives. Turner accepts that her activities achieved little, and nor will those whose true concern today is but to signal their own unimpeachable virtue in their commitment to the "omnicause".

Dr Jonathan Lewis
Pinner, Middx

Sir, Like Janice Turner I was an undergraduate at Sussex University in the early 1980s. Our anarchist group consisted of about 30 students who delighted in discussing the relative merits of Kropotkin, Proudhon, Malatesta et al. We had nothing but contempt for the bourgeois conformity of left-wing students who espoused the trendy causes of the day.

David Isaacson
London NW10

Border controls

Sir, Your perceptive leading article "Tunnel Vision" (May 20) falls short of recommending that all our major political parties should end their vows of silence on the future of Britain's relationship with the EU. Your editorial adds to the growing weight of evidence that leaving the EU has not provided any measurable benefits to the UK. Instead, our "rewards" have been higher costs, lower growth and chaotic border controls. We await one party to be honest on Europe, just like the little boy in Hans Christian Andersen's *The Emperor's New Clothes*.

Michael Jack
Former financial secretary to the Treasury; Totnes, Devon

Sir, One way to deal with the constraints on space at St Pancras ("Border rules mean long Eurostar waits", May 20) would be to reduce in number the airport-style shops that flank the entrance to the terminal. Sadly, as this is a railway station attached to a shopping centre, not the reverse, this will not happen and passengers will have to take the strain.

Rhys David
Redbourn, Herts

PHOTOGRAPHS SENT BY TELEPHONE

FROM THE TIMES MAY 21, 1924

Fifteen photographs were sent over an ordinary telephone wire 579 miles, from Cleveland to New York, yesterday in a demonstration lasting two hours of a new invention by the American Telephone and Telegraph Company. The pictures when developed in New York proved such faithful reproductions of the originals that, without retouching, they could be printed in today's newspapers exactly as other pictures are. Retaining the essential characteristics of the original photographs they closely resemble pictures taken with "soft focus"

lenses. The time of transmission of each picture was 4min 36sec. A positive film was clamped on a cylinder in Cleveland and through the film a ray of light fell, with an intensity which varied with the thickness of the emulsion, upon a potassium pencil constituting a photo-electric cell in the centre of the cylinder. The cylinder was shifted a sixty-fifth of an inch to the right with each revolution, and the receiving cylinder in New York was synchronised with it. As the light fell upon the photo-electric cell an electric current was produced of varying strength which passed over the telephone wire to New York, the current being reinforced at Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. The variations of the current were mechanically translated by the receiving instrument and the variations of light so produced acted upon a film which was then developed like any other photographic film. Four different

electrical companies have been working upon the same problem for more than a year, but with different methods. Within a short time attempts will be made to send photographs by wireless across the Atlantic. At present, however, even wire transmission requires practically perfect conditions; commercially successful transmission by wireless is considered unlikely in the near future. News in brief: Captain G H Wilkins proposes to lead an expedition to the Antarctic next year to demonstrate the feasibility of setting up a ring of meteorological wireless stations in the Antarctic. He is confident that aeroplanes could be used in the summer months for observing ice distribution along the bottom of the Pacific.

THETIMES.CO.UK/ARCHIVE

Brutality of war

Sir, Jack Hearn's story ("D-Day dodger" sets war record straight", May 18) brought back memories of my late father, Bert. Like many old soldiers he rarely talked about the wartime experiences that most upset him. He served in the desert, Greece and Palestine but it was the battle of Monte Cassino that made the deepest impression on him: it was his only experience of hand-to-hand fighting, such were the chaotic circumstances that he and his comrades faced. D-Day had a fairly clear "front" but that did not exist at Cassino. Combatants could unexpectedly face each other and my father had such an experience in a derelict building: he and a German soldier surprised each other with bayonets fixed, and my father reacted first, wounding his enemy. He then realised that his opponent was a teenager. Bert was 28. The young German was crying and calling for his mother; my father held him until he died in his arms.

Bert only told me this story once — I got the impression that he had kept it to himself. I can't remember what prompted this revelation but it moved me deeply. My father was one of many decent men who never expected to be soldiers but did their duty when the time came.

Chris Haddock
Halifax

Blood inquiry

Sir, The fearless condemnation of a succession of governments contained in Sir Brian Langstaff's report goes to an even greater issue than the immediate ones it concerns ("Patients betrayed by 'cover-up', infected blood inquiry finds", May 20). Politicians, those with a vested interest and institutions may lie. Judges do not. Everyone must be answerable to the overarching protection provided by the rule of law. Moves to exclude such accountability represent an attack on the separation of powers so essential for any democracy worthy of the name. They may also be the beginning of something far worse.

Ian Baker
London NW3

Ofsted ratings

Sir, I disagree with Trevor Phillips's suggestion that a school can be rated by Ofsted with a single word ("Labour must not bow to public sector interests", May 20). Schools are complex multifaceted organisations, with many aspects that have to be judged by inspectors. It is ludicrous to suggest that a school that fails to satisfy Ofsted in everything but one topic should be described as inadequate. Schools deserve a much more subtle and nuanced approach by inspectors, and most schools would welcome criticism, provided it was fair and constructive.

David Kidd
Former chairman, Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools

Meet my de facto

Sir, Rose Wild (Feedback, May 18) seeks a term for a person living out of wedlock with another. What about the pithy and gender-neutral Scots word a "bidie-in"?

Michael Olizar
London SW15

Letters to The Times must be exclusive and may be edited. Please include a full address and daytime telephone number.

Daily Universal Register

UK: RHS Chelsea Flower Show opens, with the first two days for RHS members only; International Booker Prize winner named; England Euro 2024 squad announced.

Nature notes



Small ermine moths are lovely: pure white with black spots and a fluffy tippet around their shoulders, like a starlet in the ivory fur coat for which they are named. Yet it's not for their adult outfits that they are best known, but for the huge webs spun by their larvae in shrubs and hedges at about this time of year, which act to protect the caterpillars from predators as they grow. These webs often provoke some public alarm, but they're completely natural and tend to disappear on their own, and the plants the caterpillars have been feeding on generally recover. There are several species of small ermine, some of which specialise in a particular food plant, such as euonymus, willow and sedum. MELISSA HARRISON

Birthdays today



Prof Sir Stanley Wells, pictured, honorary president, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, 94; **Martin Carthy**, folk singer and guitarist, 83; **Claire Cashmore**, swimmer, Paralympic gold medalist (2016), 36; **Mark Cavendish**, cyclist, world road race champion (2011) and winner of 34 Tour de France stages, 39; **Tom Daley**, diver, Olympic gold medalist (2020, synchronised 10m platform), 10m platform world champion (2009, 2017), 30; **Alexandra Danson**, field hockey player, former captain of England and Great Britain, Olympic gold medalist (2016), 39; **Nadine Dorries**, Conservative MP for Mid Bedfordshire (2005-23), digital, culture, media and sport secretary (2021-22), 67; **Noel Fielding**, actor, *The Mighty Boosh* (2003-07), comedian and presenter, *The Great British Bake Off* (2017-23), 51; **Isa Guha**, cricketer, England (2001-11), now commentator, 39; **Tony Hayward**, chairman, Glencore Xstrata (2014-21), chief executive, BP (2007-10), 67; **Simon Hiscocks**, sailor, double Olympic medalist (2000, 2004), 51; **Lord (David) Hunt of Wirral**, secretary of state for Wales (1990-93), 82; **Jonathan Hyde**, actor, *Titanic* (1997), 76; **Ronald Isley**, singer-songwriter, the Isley Brothers, 83; **Sir Peter Lampl**, founder (1997) and chairman, Sutton Trust, 77; **Andrew Neil**, editor, *The Sunday Times* (1983-94), and broadcaster, 75; **Hans Ulrich Obrist**, artistic director, Serpentine Gallery, 56; **Peter Phillips**, artist, an originator of Pop Art, 85; **Rosalind Plowright**, mezzo-soprano, 75; **Mary Robinson**, president of Ireland (1990-97), UN high commissioner for human rights (1997-2002), 80; **Leo Sayer**, singer, *You Make Me Feel Like Dancing* (1976), 76; **Nicola Shaw**, chief executive, Yorkshire Water, *High Speed 1* (2011-16), 55; **Lenn Sissay**, author, *My Name Is Why* (2019), and broadcaster, 57; **Thomas Teague**, KC, chief coroner of England and Wales, 70; **Edward Watson**, principal dancer, *The Royal Ballet* (2005-20), *The Metamorphosis* (Olivier Award, 2012), now a répétiteur, 48.

On this day

In 1999 the romantic comedy *Notting Hill*, starring Hugh Grant and Julia Roberts, was released in UK cinemas.

The last word

"The end of man is an action and not a thought, though it were the noblest." Thomas Carlyle, historian and political philosopher, *Sartor Resartus* (1834)



Day of Shame

The Infected Blood Inquiry's final report exposes decades of mistreatment, lies and official cover-up. Compensation and restorative justice must be swiftly delivered

The final verdict of Sir Brian Langstaff's inquiry into the use of contaminated blood products by the National Health Service between 1970 and 1998 will inspire many thousands of words of commentary, few of them complimentary of the British state. But let us begin with the three that expose the culture of impunity, callousness and elite disdain that ultimately led to 3,000 deaths and the ruin of countless more lives by sickness and bereavement: "incredibly bad luck."

That was how Sir John Major, the former prime minister, described to the inquiry the infection of at least 30,000 people by experimental treatments which those in power knew to be dangerous at the time they were administered. Now the dwindling band of survivors and the blameless families left grieving for the dead know they were not the unlucky victims of some unavoidable injustice. They were negligently failed and intentionally deceived, again and again, by a medical establishment unwilling to face the truth and a political class determined to conceal it. To call this scandal a calamity, as Sir Brian does, almost risks underplaying the sheer scale of the human misery and indifference to suffering his inquiry has revealed.

When the Right Reverend James Jones, the Bishop of Liverpool, published his review of the ignorance, disrespect and condescension suffered by the families of those killed in the Hillsborough disaster, he titled it "The Patronising Disposition of Unaccountable Power". Britain's recent history has been grimly punctuated by catastrophes that follow this template. Almost all have been the consequence of state incompetence, followed by obfuscation by the powerful and delayed disclosure to the powerless.

In some of the most egregious cases victims have died before receiving the moral, legal and financial redress to which they have been entitled. The loved ones of the 97 Liverpool fans killed at Hillsborough in 1989 knew it. The hundreds of subpostmasters driven to financial ruin, shame and suicide knew it. The mothers and babies killed and maimed in failing NHS maternity units knew it. And so, with grotesque inevitability, did the victims of contaminated blood. If we are to call these people unlucky, it should not be to describe the original wrong done to them. Their bad luck was to be born in a country so temperamentally prone to what Sir Brian rightly describes as "subtle, pervasive and chilling" abuses of trust in authority.

In cases such as this, the truth, however belated, is a powerful thing. But for those who contracted HIV, hepatitis C and other deadly blood-borne medical conditions it is no final moment of catharsis. Nor will it be so for their families, for whom the scandal remains an ever-present source of anguish. For each day the inquiry ran another four victims died. As Sir Brian concluded: "The grief and trauma which all of those who lost loved ones experienced continues to this day... Every aspect of their lives has been defined by their infections – childhood; education; career; leisure; relationships; marriages; home ownership; travel; finances; dreams and ambitions have been lost and relationships broken." The trauma inflicted on both the infected and affected whose cases were examined by the inquiry, established shamefully late by the government of Theresa May in 2017, is incalculable. Through their arrogance and self-interest, NHS leaders, Whitehall officials and ministers repeatedly compounded the pain.

When a good citizen comes to harm through no fault of their own, or hears of the kind of systemic injustice so forensically exposed by Sir Brian and the tireless campaigners who ensured his inquiry was commissioned, the cry goes up: something must be done. That cry is similarly heard in the corridors of power when its inhabitants are confronted with their own failure, and their answer is to cover up. Doctors who administered blood-clotting drugs to their patients had known for decades of the risk of viral infection. In many cases they proceeded with indifference, falsely reassuring those whose lives were changed for ever, experimenting on vulnerable patients and children without proper consent being secured, concealing their patients' diagnoses of HIV and hepatitis, and deleting the medical records which held the key to treatment and closure.

Ministers such as Ken Clarke, who was then a health minister under Margaret Thatcher, knew as early as 1982 that HIV could be transmitted through blood products. They told the public otherwise, and destroyed records which might have exposed just how many people might have been saved from infection. Successive prime ministers accepted briefings that told them, in spite of mounting evidence and increasingly desperate demands for justice, that the NHS had merely prescribed the best treatment available.

Yet nothing of the sort was true. NHS blood

products imported from donors in the United States routinely included plasma harvested from drug addicts and prisoners, often paid a pittance for the deadly donation. It has taken decades, under duress and under oath, for British ministers to acknowledge this fatal error. Yet, all along they knew. Doctors, officials and ministers alike were moved to action in pursuit of self-preservation.

It was as early as 1975 that David Owen, then a health minister under James Callaghan, sought to make Britain self-sufficient in blood products, so as to minimise the danger of importing infection. Instead of continuing this sound policy, his successors recklessly embraced risk. Sir Brian concludes that the 1973 licensing of the factor VIII blood products responsible for spreading disease ought never to have been allowed.

Rishi Sunak cannot erase the mistakes of his predecessors. He cannot raise the dead who have been denied the truth by the condescending paternalism of their doctors and the delaying tactics of successive governments. He cannot cure the sick or prevent those who have lived just long enough to read the report's 2,572 pages, cataloguing the pointlessness of their pain, from dying in the coming days and weeks. That dozens of ministers were appointed, reshuffled and sacked before government finally made itself answerable to victims in 2017 is not Mr Sunak's fault. But it is now his responsibility to ensure justice without delay.

Two years have passed since Sir Brian first recommended significant financial compensation to the infected and affected. In that period Tory administrations have dragged their feet, perhaps hoping that a straitened Labour government will be left to foot the bill. This, as Sir Brian warns, merely "compounds the harm which has already been inflicted". To their credit, both the prime minister and Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor, now say they recognise that justice cannot wait. It will come at a cost, and it is theirs to pay at once.

For those damned to suffer by unaccountable power, money will not be enough. But it must come. So too must prosecutions for those whose silence, denial and obfuscation prolonged the infected blood scandal. In the future, those in public service must be obliged by law to act with full candour when failure is exposed. It is too late for those left dead and dying by contaminated blood. If their suffering is to mean something, it must be accountability.

Lost in the Fog

The death of the Butcher of Tehran will send ripples across the Middle East

The helicopter crash that killed Iran's president, Ebrahim Raisi, bore all the hallmarks of a chaotic, mismanaged state. The president's patched-up aircraft was a relic from 1979; it should not have been allowed to fly through the dense fog that clung to the craggy hills of northwest Iran. The rescue operation was slow and bungled, the wreckage found only with the help of a Turkish drone. What happens next is likely to deepen the sense that Iran is a country slipping out of control.

There will now be a rushed presidential election, attempts to blame Iran's enemies, police round-ups. A veritable game of thrones battle for succession that will expose layers of deep dysfunction. Iran, which has been posturing as the equal of Russia and China in the global autocratic axis, is in fact a weak link in the international system. Mr Raisi was positioning himself as the prime successor to the ailing 85-year-old supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Yet he was no holy man. As deputy prosecutor-general in 1988 he raced through a list of thousands of jailed political dissidents and ordered their execution, often at the rate of one every 15 minutes. Hence his nickname: the Butcher of Tehran.

Later, after winning a rigged presidential election with a narrow margin, he tightened a hijab and chastity law that authorised the morality police to lock up and sometimes beat up young women who dared expose their hair or dance in public. Abroad, his aim was to isolate Israel. The use of a network of hostile proxy militias directed at Israel was engineered on his watch, run by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard and given shape by the Iranian government's foreign policy across the region.

To outsiders he played the peacemaker. But the point was always to undermine American and Israeli influence. He accepted a Chinese offer to broker reconciliation between Tehran and Riyadh and move closer to the Arab states. When the US withdrew from Afghanistan he calculated that Iran would be able to move more freely across the region. His aim was to knit Iran more closely with the Gulf states, Turkey, Russia and China. As a

kind of dowry he nurtured Iran's booming drone business and the weapons have gone to have a devastating effect on Russia's campaign against Ukraine.

The first regime response to his death might be to seek out scapegoats. That could take the form of a renewed purge of separatists and reformers. Or to concoct an Israeli-backed conspiracy. But ultimately Iran has to find out what to do with its old men. Mr Raisi was seen as a favourite to become supreme leader because, at 63, he seemed almost sprightly. Now one idea might be to place the supreme leader's son in the starting blocks. That would have tumultuous consequences. Any suggestion that power is being passed on within his own family could spark an urban rebellion in a country that has, despite brutal crackdowns, risen again and again in recent years. The regime is being held together with force and threats, its leaders increasingly corrupt. Soon enough there will likely be a generational uprising against them, and it won't be pretty.

World

Israel outraged at call for Netanyahu's arrest

Israel

Gabrielle Weiniger Tel Aviv

Israeli leaders put aside any disagreements over the conduct of the conflict in Gaza to defend their prime minister and defence minister who last night faced possible arrest warrants on war crimes charges, along with the leaders of Hamas.

The chief prosecutor for the International Criminal Court (ICC), Karim Khan KC, said he was seeking arrest warrants for both Binyamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant for using starvation as a weapon and directing attacks against civilians, among other alleged offences.

He accused the Hamas leaders Yahya Sinwar, Mohammed Deif and Ismail Haniyeh of mass murder, taking hostages, rape and other acts of sexual violence as crimes against humanity.

Khan's office announced last year that it would investigate allegations and crimes committed by Hamas on October 7 and also Israel's legal obligations in the Gaza Strip, including the delivery of humanitarian aid.

In a statement posted on the ICC website, Khan said the arrest applications "are the outcome of an independent and impartial investigation" separating claims from facts. The ICC's panel of pre-trial judges must now decide whether they agree that the threshold for a realistic prospect of conviction has been met. Only then can the court issue arrest warrants, as it did last year for President Putin and Maria Lvova-Belova, the Russian commissioner for children, for child abductions during the 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Israel has faced international criticism over its military campaign in the Gaza Strip which has killed more than 35,000 people, according to the Hamas-led health ministry, and left some 1.7 million people displaced.

The announcement condemning Israel's actions and apparently equating Netanyahu and Gallant with their avowed terrorist enemies was met with scorn in Jerusalem. Benny Gantz, a

rival to Netanyahu and the third member of Israel's war cabinet who has criticised his lack of foresight about post-war Gaza, accused the prosecutor of "moral blindness".

He wrote on X, the social media site: "The state of Israel embarked on the most just war, after a massacre by a terrorist organisation against its citizens. The state of Israel fights in the most moral way in history, adhering to international law, and has an independent and strong judicial system. Placing the leaders of a country that went into battle to protect its citizens in the same line with bloodthirsty terrorists is moral blindness and a violation of its duty and ability to protect its citizens." He added: "Accepting the position of the prosecutor would be a historical crime."

Bezalel Smotrich, the finance minister, denounced Khan's decision as a "show of hypocrisy and Jew-hatred".

Israel is not a signatory to the ICC, but the court claims it has jurisdiction to investigate potential war crimes carried out by Israelis in the Gaza Strip and Hamas militants in Israel, based on a 2021 decision which the Israeli government disputes. The ICC also claims jurisdiction over East Jerusalem, Gaza and the West Bank since Palestinian leaders agreed in 2015 to be bound by the court's founding principles.

Hamas also reacted angrily to Khan's statement, claiming that it "equates the victim with the executioner" and would encourage Israel to continue "its war of extermination".

The ICC's statement outlined the court's "willingness to apply the law equally", issuing warrants against Sinwar and Deif, Hamas's leader and military commander in Gaza respectively, who Israel accuses of orchestrating the October 7 attacks, as well as Haniyeh, leader of the political bureau, who resides in Qatar.

The Palestinian group, proscribed as terrorists by Britain, the US and others, are officially accused of extermination of Israeli civilians as well as taking at

Profile

Karim Khan is a poacher turned gamekeeper, with a history of defending those accused of war crimes (Jonathan Ames, Legal Editor, writes). The barrister is a bench — senior member — of Lincoln's Inn and took over the top prosecution role at the Hague in 2021, seven months before Russia's invasion of Ukraine, that brought him to prominence.

After being called to the Bar and qualifying to practise, the 54-year-old undertook a three-year stint at the Crown Prosecution



Karim Khan served on the ICC tribunal for Rwanda

Service before taking a role as a legal officer at the ICC's tribunal for Rwanda in 1998.

In 2000, he returned to the Bar in London and was promoted to Queen's Counsel, now KC, a decade later, spending another 10 years in private practice.

It was during that time that Khan represented several international high-profile alleged offenders such as Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, son of the former Libyan dictator, who is still wanted by the ICC for alleged crimes against humanity.

He also represented Charles Taylor, the former president of Liberia, who was convicted by a special court in 2012 of 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including unlawful killings, rape and sexual slavery.

least 245 hostages during the October attacks. The ICC prosecutor's investigation included interviewing former hostages and eyewitnesses from the hardest-hit kibbutzim and the Nova music festival where many of the atrocities occurred.

Khan also outlined the inhumane conditions in which Hamas and other militant groups have kidnapped and kept civilians detained. Some 128 Israeli hostages remain captive in the Gaza Strip, although it is not known how many have survived the ordeal.

"There are reasonable grounds to believe that hostages taken from Israel have been kept in inhumane conditions, and that some have been subject to sexual violence, including rape, while being held in captivity," the statement read.

If the warrants are approved, the 124 states who are signed-up members of the ICC, including Britain, would be obliged to detain and transfer any leaders who set foot on their territory.

Dr Solon Solomon, an assistant professor at Brunel University law school and former member of the Knesset legal department in Israel's parliament, said that the subjects of any warrants will have difficulty travelling around the world.

"Whereas this may have a lesser impact for the Hamas leaders, it will most likely impact more the Israeli ones, especially when it comes to the latter's travelling in European allied states which are also parties to the Rome Statute," he said, referring to the 1998 treaty.

The US has previously said it opposes the ICC investigation into alleged Israeli war crimes in Gaza, saying it does not believe the top criminal court "has the jurisdiction."

Antony Blinken, the secretary of state, warned that the "shameful" move could jeopardise efforts to reach a ceasefire in the war or release more hostages. However, the US is also not a signatory of the court and does not have the power to block the inquiry.



Ayatollah

Iran

Samer Al-Atrush

Middle East Correspondent

The death of Iran's hardline president was confirmed yesterday, provoking a mixed reaction and presenting a fresh challenge for the Islamic regime to hold elections within 50 days to replace him.

The news that Ebrahim Raisi had died was announced by state media after his helicopter crashed on Sunday. Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, the foreign minister, also died in the accident, blamed on bad weather and malfunction, as Raisi's delegation returned from a visit to Azerbaijan. Israel, Iran's arch-enemy, denied involvement.

Mohammad Mokhber, the vice-president, assumed office and declared five days of mourning for Raisi, 63, a former cleric and prosecutor widely seen as a potential successor to Ayatollah Khamenei, as Iran's supreme leader.

With his funeral due to begin today, the European Union, Russia, India, and several other countries sent condolen-

Greatest survivor faces biggest challenge of his career

Analysis

Even if the International Criminal Court agrees to issue arrest warrants for the prime minister and defence minister of Israel, neither man is likely to stand trial (Anshel Pfeffer writes).

Israel is not a signatory to the court's Rome Statute and is under no obligation to hand over its leaders. Yet if the judges grant the request of the British prosecutor Karim Khan, it would put severe restrictions on the ability of Binyamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant, right, to visit the

124 countries that are signatories. Warrants would have much less impact on the three Hamas leaders named by Khan, who are unlikely any time soon to be in a country where they could face arrest.

Khan's statement is nevertheless a blow to the Israeli leader. It puts him on a similar standing to the Hamas leaders who directed the October 7 massacre and to President Putin, against whom an arrest warrant was issued last year for abducting children from

Ukraine and taking them to Russia. Most of Israel's allies, including the United Kingdom, are ICC signatories and would find it hard to continue dealing with the prime minister if the warrants were issued.

It is also a blow to Israel's international legitimacy, already diminished, to continue pursuing the war against Hamas in Gaza. Israel's most important ally, the United States, is not a signatory

but Netanyahu has already come under criticism from the Biden administration for failing to pay enough attention to the humanitarian needs of civilians in Gaza.

On one level at least, Khan's statement will be of benefit to Netanyahu. It will allow him in Israel — where his popularity has fallen since the war began — to portray himself as a martyr being persecuted by a biased court for standing up for his country's interests.

Even his political opponents cannot accept that the prime minister can be accused in the same context as Hamas leaders. Despite their criticism of

how he has handled the war, on this issue they will have to rally around him. It may even give him a small boost in the polls. But, as public protests continue about Netanyahu's failure to bring home the Israeli hostages, it is unlikely to last for long.

Netanyahu has always claimed to be a master statesman, capable of putting Israel's case to the world and making the deals and alliances necessary for a small country to survive and prosper. An ICC arrest warrant, no matter how unfair it may be, threatens his position as a world leader and will boost the arguments of his political rivals that his time is up.



Ukraine's wildlife crushed by Russian war machine
Page 28

Jacob Zuma barred from standing in election
Page 30



Mourners in Tehran yesterday, part of an official show of grief for President Raisi, top right in footage from the ill-fated flight in the ageing Bell helicopter. The bodies of victims were recovered once searchers could find no sign of life at the crash site, a remote area of northern Iran



demands a swift replacement for Raisi

ces, as did the militant groups Hamas and Hezbollah.

But Iranian dissidents celebrated the death of Raisi, nicknamed the Butcher of Tehran for his role in executing thousands of opposition prisoners in the late 1980s. Elected president in 2021, he also helped to oversee a crackdown on the protests that erupted in 2022 after the death in custody of a young woman, Mahsa Amini, who had been arrested for not wearing a "proper" hijab.

Masih Alnejad, an exiled Iranian journalist and activist, wrote on Twitter/X: "To the US government, EU, and the free world: Do not express condolences to the thousands of victims of Ebrahim Raisi. Instead, express your support for the people of Iran."

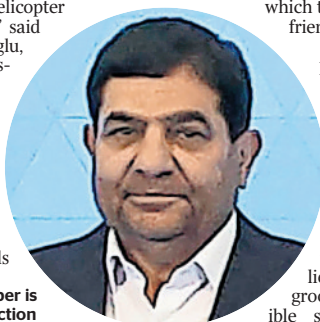
Mokhber, who previously headed an investment fund linked to Khamenei, has the task of arranging the election to replace Raisi, whose own election came after a vote widely seen as rigged and excluded serious rivals.

The Iranian government is investigating the accident. Officials said that

there was heavy fog and poor visibility when the ageing Bell 212 was over mountainous terrain in the province of East Azerbaijan. The helicopter disintegrated on impact, leaving part of the tail intact. Turkey, which had sent drones and rescue teams to seek wreckage, said the helicopter did not emit an emergency signal after crashing. "Most likely the signal system was turned off or the helicopter did not have one," said Abdulkadir Uraloglu, the Turkish transport minister.

The accident came weeks after Israel bombed an Iranian military base in retaliation for a rocket and drone attack on its territory.

Iranian officials
Mohammad Mokhber is to organise the election



did not blame Israel and said that the accident was caused by a malfunction and poor weather. An Israeli official told Reuters: "It wasn't us."

A former Iranian foreign minister, however, blamed US sanctions on Iran, which had hindered procuring spare parts for the American-produced helicopter that was probably bought before Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution, which toppled the western-friendly Shah.

Khamenei posted a photograph of himself and Raisi on Twitter/X, and offered his "condolences to the dear people of Iran". The 85-year-old cleric, who is the final authority in the theocracy, is believed to have groomed Raisi as a possible successor, although

Khamenei's son Mojtaba is seen as another candidate.

Although Raisi's death will shake up the regime's succession plans, it will have little bearing on Iranian foreign policy. The issues include the Houthis in Yemen, who have paralysed commercial shipping in the Red Sea with attacks on vessels since October, when another Iranian ally, Hamas, attacked Israel and provoked the war in Gaza.

Iran's main ally, Hezbollah, has also engaged in daily cross-border attacks on Israel, raising concerns of a possible invasion of southern Lebanon.

Iran attacked Israel last month with several hundred drones and missiles, after an Israeli airstrike flattened their consulate in Damascus and killed a top military commander. The missile attack raised fears of a war between the two rivals, but Israel's retaliation, which consisted of a discreet strike on a radar at a military airbase, defused the tensions. A death that will send ripples across the Middle East, leading article, page 25

Analysis

Ayatollah Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader, assured the nation that the accident which killed President Raisi would not "interrupt" the work of the state (Samer Al-Atrush writes). That task, in the interim, now falls to Mohammad Mokhber, a regime apparatchik and the first vice-president.

In truth, however, Raisi's death has upended Khamenei's possible succession plans, as well as the election due next year that Raisi was expected to comfortably win after any serious rivals were again barred from running.

It comes at a sensitive time for the unpopular regime, which periodically finds itself putting down mass disorder with brute force. A year after Raisi's death in 2021, the security services responded harshly to protests led by women demonstrating against strict Islamic regulations.

Raisi, a hardline jurist who is sanctioned by the United States for sending thousands of political prisoners to their deaths in 1988, responded in a characteristic manner to the protests, which resulted in thousands of protesters and critics being arrested. Some, like the rapper Toomaj Salehi, have been sentenced to death.

In these circumstances, many voters stayed away from the polls in April's parliamentary elections after a majority of reformist candidates were barred. The elections recorded the lowest turnout in the republic's history, but the coming presidential elections may beat even that.

It is not clear who will emerge as Khamenei's choice for president, but it will be hard to replace Raisi, who came to power after the eight-year term of the pragmatic Hassan Rouhani.

Under Raisi, the hardliners consolidated their day-to-day influence over government. "He had support from the key constituencies: the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps, the clerics, the hardliners. He was a team player," said Sanam Vakili, director of the Middle East and North Africa Programme at the Chatham House think tank.

More importantly, Raisi was a strong contender to succeed Khamenei, who is 85 and has been supreme leader since 1989, when Ayatollah Khomeini, the regime's founder, died.

"Raisi was a good candidate because he fit Khamenei's bill," said Vakili. "It means there are other scenarios now."

Those could include another rumoured candidate, Khamenei's son, Mojtaba Khamenei, who has nothing approaching Raisi's credentials and experience.

Raisi's death will, though, have little bearing on foreign policy, which is run by Khamenei and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, who oversee a network of allies and proxies in the region that have turned Tehran into a Middle East power. However, they have lost a kindred spirit, and at a time when their policies both at home and abroad are increasingly reviled by Iranians.

World

Mosquitoes biting into Games fever

France
Constance Kampfer

As France prepares to host the Olympic Games, one unwelcome visitor has already crashed the party.

Tiger mosquitoes carrying dengue fever are plaguing the country, with public health officials warning that the “unprecedented situation” is expected to worsen as tourists from around the world pour in this summer.

More than 2,000 cases of dengue fever were recorded in the first four months of the year, 13 times as many as in the same period last year. The virus was first detected in mainland France in 2004 and has slowly spread.

It is now present in 80 per cent of areas in the country, including Paris and the wider Île-de-France region.

Dengue is transmitted when a female tiger mosquito bites an infected person and passes on the virus to another person. Most cases are asymptomatic so people can easily transport the virus without realising it.

Symptoms include high fever, headaches, stomach pains and vomiting. In the worst cases, sufferers can die.

Yannick Simonin, a virology professor at Montpellier University, said: “All the elements are in place for a record year for dengue fever.”

Anna-Bella Failloux, an entomologist at the Pasteur Institute in Paris, told the newspaper Le Parisien that she and her colleagues were “all a bit panicked, with the Olympics coming”.

More than 15 million visitors are expected during the Olympic and Paralympic games, with 13 per cent coming from abroad. Health officials said the administration was “fully mobilised”.

Door-to-door operations have been organised in certain regions to encourage homeowners not to leave stagnant water for the insects to breed in, and mosquito traps have been installed in town squares.

Residents were asked to stay home when Paris had to be fumigated for the first time last summer in an attempt to kill the disease-carrying mosquitoes.



Red car-pet Demi Moore cradles her chihuahua during a photo call for The Substance at the Cannes Film Festival yesterday

Hitler beetle name won't be changed

Germany
David Crossland Berlin

For millennia a species of blind, brown beetle lived a secluded existence in a handful of humid caves in Slovenia.

This blissful obscurity ended in 1937 when an Austrian collector named the insect, otherwise unremarkable in hue and antennae, after Adolf Hitler — Germany's chancellor.

Calls for *Anophthalmus hitleri* to be renamed have resonated for much of the time since and, along with other species with controversial monikers such as the Mussolini butterfly, have intensified in recent years. Now, however, the pleas have been rejected by the body in charge of naming species.

The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature said changing names on ethical grounds would cause confusion and could lead to hundreds of thousands of scientific names being called into question.

“We understand, of course, that some names can cause discomfort or offence,” said Daniel Whitmore, a taxonomist from the State Museum of Natural History in Stuttgart, a member of the commission. He added, however, that the commission's priority was universal and stable nomenclature.

“It's not our job to judge whether names are offensive or ethically unacceptable because that is a very subjective and personal matter,” he said. “It would be difficult to make a decision that everyone would be happy with.”

Michael Ohl, a zoologist at Berlin Natural History Museum, said the nomenclature commission was reluctant to “open a Pandora's box” of name changing. However, it needed to address the issue. “The pressure from society and the scientific community is strong,” he added.

Name change or not, the Hitler beetle would continue to be referred to as such, scientists warned. The species' popularity among Nazi memorabilia collectors — it can fetch over £1,000 on the black market — is one of the reasons for its endangered status.

Putin massacres Ukraine's wildlife

Dolphins, pelicans, even flamingos are among the casualties of war, writes Maxim Tucker



On a clear night, the hum of Russian drones flying over the lagoon echoes across the park's open expanse, making it difficult for the Ukrainian troops listening out for them to pinpoint their location.

That has made these wild swathes of salt lake and marshland a favoured route for the winged bombs that descend every night upon residents of Ukraine's Black Sea coast, fired from Russian bases in occupied Crimea.

In the Tuzly Lagoons National Nature Park, most of those residents are not human: the nature reserve is home to 265 species of animal, including eagles, pelicans, beavers, jackals, swamp turtles and even flamingos.

Yet each night idyl gives way to battle. The park reverberates to the sound of explosions as Ukrainian air defences

seek to prevent the drones, as well as missiles fired by Russian ships and submarines, reaching their cities.

Caught in the crossfire are thousands of uncounted casualties, clad in fur, feathers and blubber. The most visible victims are the dolphins that have begun washing ashore on the park's beaches in unprecedented numbers.

Some scientists have blamed their deaths on the Russian navy's use of sonar, as well as blasts from missile launches and explosions. The sound waves can damage the dolphins' ability to navigate or detect prey with their own sonar, or concussion them into suffocating while submerged, the scientists believe.

“The soldiers here told us that when there was bombing, they saw an incredible number of dolphins fleeing into the Danube river,” said Iryna Vykhrystiuk, the national park's manager. “Then we started finding dead dolphins — 122 times as many as in previous years.”

Last year a group of Polish and Ukrainian scientists published an article with The Royal Society arguing that between 37,500 and 48,000 cetaceans had been killed in the first three months of the war alone. One of the authors of



Much of the birdlife at Tuzly reserve has left, never to return, experts fear

the paper was Dr Ivan Rusev, the Tuzly park's research director.

“The deaths correlate to the Russian navy's presence,” said Rusev. “This year we have reports of 280 dolphins killed off Krasnodar and about 200 dolphins near Sevastopol in Crimea.”

He extrapolates that the Black Sea has lost as many as 80,000 of the cetaceans, a devastating figure for a popula-

tion of about 300,000, although other scientists are more cautious.

There may be different causes: after Russian troops destroyed the Nova Kakhovka dam last June, floodwaters swept toxins from industrial estates and cemeteries into the sea, traces of which were found in dolphin carcasses.

An estimated 18 cubic kilometres of freshwater washed into the lagoons, desalinating them and the coastal waters nearby. The sudden shift killed 105 million mussels on the seabed, according to environmental investigators.

Russian strikes on Ukrainian ports and oil refineries in the area are further contaminating the environment.

Ukraine is now investigating Russia's war on wildlife as “ecocide”, in the hope of one day taking select cases before the International Criminal Court as war crimes. Richard Rogers, a British barrister who worked on war crimes incidents in the Balkans and Cambodia, is helping Ukraine to develop the case.

“Within the next year, we expect the prosecutor-general to initiate the first prosecutions for environmental war crimes and ecocide in Ukrainian courts,” said Rogers, who now serves as executive director of Climate Counsel.

In areas of Ukraine occupied by Russia the damage being done is potentially far greater, but harder to assess. Locals have accused Russian troops of slaughtering protected wildlife for food, and moving heavy equipment into Ukrainian national parks to use them as artillery ranges.

“They conducted artillery training in May, exactly when birds are getting settled and nesting. The entire population of 100,000 birds just left the area, and the following year only 5,000 to 6,000 came back,” said Oleksandr Bronskov, an ornithologist who worked at national parks in Donetsk and Mariupol before coming to Tuzly Lagoons.

Some species, such as the dalmatian pelican, have never returned to nest in Ukraine, he said. A Donbas native, he understands the birds' trauma all too well: in 2014, he had to flee his home from the Russians, and then flee again in 2022 from his job at the Meotyd National Nature Park on the Azov Sea.

“Even after de-occupation, I'm not sure I will ever want to return,” he said. “I just hope something will still be alive there when we get the parks back.”

Additional reporting by Marian Prysiazniuk

French told to shrug off the blues and eat

France

David Chazan Paris

For decades, France has been afflicted by *le déclinisme* — the sense that its prestige and power are waning. Its once-exalted cuisine is criticised as staid and unadventurous, while Paris's dominance in art and fashion has been usurped by London and New York.

Three quarters of French people believe their country is in decline, according to surveys, but young social media influencers are promoting renewed national pride. They are urging their hundreds of thousands of followers to celebrate France's gastronomy,

wines and rich cultural heritage, and the movement is gaining popularity.

Pierre-Alexandre de Boisse gave up a job in finance to run Le Canon Français, a firm that organises traditional banquets across France, generally attended by hundreds of people. It has 200,000 Instagram followers.

"Some left-wingers don't like us because we eat too much meat and we're old-school French, but the people who attend our events are mostly in their thirties," de Boisse said. "Some people assume that we're right-wing because we choose French food and wines, and we promote the love of our *terroir*, but we're not at all interested in

getting involved in politics. We don't want any affiliation with any party."

He said the banquets — and, indeed, the love of France — are not restricted solely to the French. "We've had British, Swiss, Belgian and Spanish guests. It's about enjoying the best France has to offer, its *art de vivre*. All are welcome."

Simon Vasseur, an influencer, highlights the beauty of France's architectural heritage in Instagram videos, using the social media handle Simon de la Garde du Patrimoine. Since November, his followers have increased from 50,000 to more than 200,000.

"There's a back to the roots dynamic," he said. "In parallel with the bling-bling

culture of mainstream influencers, young people are discovering that Paris is just as cool as Dubai."

Yoann Collot, known as Dose de France on social media, grew up in a Paris suburb and said many others like him wanted to reconnect with their history. "People are sometimes completely cut off from their land and its traditions, and they're asking themselves who they are and where they come from."

Collot's family roots lie in Corrèze, in rural southwestern France. "My great-grandfather was a peasant, like his father before him, and it goes back to 1600, when my ancestor was a bell-ringer, according to local records," he said.

He urges his 170,000 followers to revel in the richness of French gastronomy and has revived an interest in *eaux-de-vie* or traditional spirits.

"The aim isn't to bring old stuff back into fashion, but to prove that it still has a place today," de Boisse said.

Emmanuel Paraschiv-Debusay is a 32-year-old influencer who promotes elegant French and European tailoring for men. "In times of crisis, we can find comfort in remembering our history," he said. "The French, the British and the Spanish have all been great in the past. Now we tend to look back with a critical eye, but there is still a lot to be proud of. All is not lost."

MUSEO NACIONAL DEL PRADO; SUCESION PABLO PICASSO, VEGAP, 2024

Portrait of Spain as a land used to hard work

Castle ruins, fiestas and flamenco-dancers have long been staples of Spanish art (Isambard Wilkinson writes).

The Prado Museum in Madrid is now staging an exhibition to counter these romantic images and the notion that Spain was cut off from the social forces that buffeted the rest of Europe.

Art and Social Change in Spain (1885-1910), which will run until September 22, will display some of the great names in Spanish art, including Pablo Picasso, Joaquín Sorolla and Juan Gris.

The 300 works, many of which have never previously been exhibited, present a rare insight into another Spain, one of reform and scientific progress amid the scourges of prostitution, emigration and poverty.

Miguel Falomir, the Prado director, said: "Spain has often been seen as exotic, apart from the great currents of modernity in Europe."

"But it took part in confronting the same problems that faced all industrial societies at



the turn of the last century. This image of Spain of tambourines, bullfighters and sevillanas and bandits is in some measure a

romantic construction that did not reflect reality. "There were strikes in Barcelona and the Basque country just as

there were in Manchester. There were problems in the countryside, anarchist violence." Dario de Regoyos

Painted the carcasses of the horses killed in bullfights being carted off for butchering to convey the animals' suffering. In Vicente

Cutanda's depiction of a strike in the northern industrial city of Bilbao he captures the heroism of workers defying oppression. Both works,

Works by Vicente Cutanda, Pablo Picasso and José Jiménez Aranda, bottom right, at the Prado Museum will depict the struggles to modernise

created in 1892 and 1894 respectively, were the product of a changing consciousness in Spain that accompanied the pains of modernisation.

The country's struggle between progress and tradition is shown poignantly in *Good Friday in Castile*, the 1904 work by de Regoyos. The painting depicts a train steaming across a bridge above a religious procession bearing an image of the Virgin of Sorrows.

Half the works on display are photographs, showing a rich tableau of Spanish life, from women pulling barges with a tow rope to attempts by anarchists to assassinate Alfonso XIII, the king who ruled before the second republic was proclaimed.

Javier Barón, the curator, said: "Many of the photographs come from private collections and have never been exhibited publicly."

"Some of them clearly bear the influence of Velázquez in terms of their composition."

Falomir said: "Usually experts explain art as a succession of styles but here in a 25 year-period we see artists of very different sensibilities, when Picasso and Gris took their first steps."

Venice ticket entry scheme 'hasn't cut numbers and breaches privacy'

Italy

Tom Kingston Rome

Venice's entry ticket scheme has failed to cut tourist numbers and violated the privacy of the city's dwindling number of residents, critics claimed yesterday.

Launched last month to tackle excessive tourism, the €5 charge for day-trippers is being levied on busy days when the 50,000 locals are outnumbered by tourist surges of more than 100,000.

But after 15 days of the charges, Giovanni Andrea Martini, an opposition councillor, claimed that visitor num-

bers were not falling. "On Sunday, June 2 last year there were 65,000 visitors compared with over 70,000 [this Sunday]," he said. "It has been a resounding failure and turned an open city into a closed one."

The totals combine ticket-buying day-trippers, ranging from 14,000 to 20,000 a day so far, with the larger number of hotel and Airbnb customers, who do not pay because a city tax is included in their accommodation costs.

Martini said a poll showed that 89 per cent of Venetians opposed the scheme



The thousands pouring into the city are undeterred by the new €5 charge

and urged a 50,000 daily cap on visitors as an alternative.

Enrico Tonolo, head of the Venice residents' association, said their privacy was being violated. "If I want to invite friends to Venice I have to apply, specifying the day, obtain a code then send it to the friends, who have to insert their data and give an email or phone number to which a code can be sent. It allows surveillance without precedent and the city [can] sell the data," he said.

Simone Venturini, the Venice tourism chief, defended the scheme. "We are not going to curb tourism in 15

days," he said. "This is a long-term project and we may increase the price next year, so it is too soon to talk about results. The people opposing this are from the left, the same people who opposed Venice's flood barrier and offered no solutions for countering tourism when the left was in charge of the city."

Martini said that Venice's real problem was the 6,000 Airbnb rentals in the city out of a total of 28,000 apartments. "We need to raise taxes on tourist rentals and incentivise rentals to Venetians — the salvation of this city lies in its repopulation," he said.

World

Nobody wants to be princess in the land of the rising sons

Japan

Richard Lloyd Parry Tokyo

Mako and Aiko are first cousins, educated at Japan's top schools and universities, but as young women their lives today could hardly be more different.

Mako, 32, lives in New York as the wife of a Japanese corporate lawyer and enjoys a life of leisure, middle-class freedom. She has a small but luxurious apartment, takes the bus around town, shops locally and volunteers at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Aiko, 22, lives with her parents. She works, editing a newsletter for the Japanese Red Cross Society, but cannot walk freely on the streets of Tokyo nor casually step into a restaurant; nor can she vote, or express a political opinion.

She is Princess Aiko, the only child of Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako. The contrast of her life with that of her cousin is at the centre of an intense, hushed debate about the survival of Japan's imperial family; an institution that, according to legend, has ruled the

allow future princesses to remain within the imperial family. The problem is that being a Japanese princess is a burden that almost no one would want to take on.

The problem is simple enough: more than half a century ago, the Japanese royals all but stopped having boys. Under the law, only a male child descended from a male emperor can ascend the throne. Putting aside Emperor Emeritus Akihito, who abdicated in 2019, only four of the 17 members of the imperial family are male.

The emperor is 64. After fertility treatment the empress, now 60, gave birth to Aiko in 2001. The emperor's immediate heir is his brother, Fumihito, 58, who has a 17-year-old son, Hisahito. The emperor's uncle, Prince Hitachi, is 88.

Eight of the 17 are over 60, including Princess Yuriko, who celebrates her 101st birthday next month.

Yoshihiko Noda, a former prime minister, observed: "It's possible that when Prince Hisahito becomes emperor, there will be no other members of the family left."

The most obvious, and popular, solution is to change the law to allow a woman to take the throne as a reigning empress. But the idea is vehemently opposed by conservative members of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

Two years ago a panel of experts appointed by the government presented a report that is now being debated by the LDP and Noda's opposition, the Constitutional Democratic Party. Their recommendations make no mention of female succession. Instead, they suggest allowing princesses to remain within the family after marriage and making it possible for existing members of the imperial family to adopt descendants of the former cadet branches of the imperial family, which lost their aristocratic status after the Second World War.

The children of the princesses would not be entitled to succeed to the throne, so the measure would increase the numbers of rivals but do nothing to add to the number of heirs.

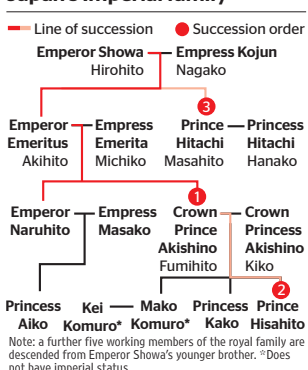
According to Japanese media, Mako's younger sister, Princess Kako, 29, a lively woman who enjoys hip-hop dancing, shows signs of wanting to get out as soon as possible. Aiko is a dutiful character who might well choose to remain within the palace — but she alone will not solve the problem.

Looking ahead, will young Hisahito find a woman willing to give up her freedom?

"Hisahito needs to marry a woman, and the empress has to have a child, and that child has to be a boy," said Noda. "I wonder whether any wife can bear such pressure."

Princess Aiko is the Japanese emperor's only child

Japan's Imperial family



archipelago since 660BC. Mako Komuro, as she is now called, is the daughter of Naruhito's younger brother, Prince Fumihito, and grew up as Princess Mako of Akishino. But under Japan's Imperial Household Law, female members of the family forfeit their imperial status when they marry commoners. When Mako married her university sweetheart, Kei Komuro, two years ago she had to leave the family and her life changed, in many ways for the better.

But the married-princess rule has contributed towards a disastrous depletion in the ranks of Japanese royalty that is threatening the institution's survival. On Friday the country's ruling and opposition parties began discussing changes that would



New Taiwan leader calls on China to end threats

Taiwan's new president has called on China to end its "political and military intimidation" (Richard Lloyd Parry

writes). William Lai, speaking on national television after his swearing-in ceremony in Taipei, appealed for dialogue across the Taiwan Strait, carefully avoiding any explicit reference to independence for the island. However, he made it clear that he would make no compromise with China's insistence that the self-ruling island is its territory.

"I hope that China will

face the reality of [our] existence and respect the choices of the people of Taiwan," he said.

Lai, 64, is regarded by Beijing as a separatist and has been described by government mouthpieces as a "troublemaker".

A spokesman for the Chinese foreign ministry responded to Lai's speech by calling the idea of Taiwanese independence "a dead end" and one "doomed to fail".

Troops rehearse a military salute to mark William Lai's swearing-in as president in Taipei yesterday

Lai grew up in a deprived town in the industrial north of Taiwan. His father was a miner who died in a pit accident when he was a baby. Despite his family's poverty, he went on to study medicine in Taipei and at Harvard University, and qualified as a doctor.

Zuma barred from standing in election

South Africa
Jane Flanagan Cape Town

South Africa's top court has ruled that Jacob Zuma, the former president, is not eligible to run as a candidate for parliament in next week's general election.

The decision by the constitutional court raises the risk that supporters of Zuma's new party may incite unrest in the run-up to the vote on May 29 or contest the outcome. There was a heavy police presence outside the court, where a crowd of Zuma supporters gathered to hear the ruling.

The constitution bars anyone convicted and sentenced to more than a year in jail from being a member of parliament until at least five years after the completion of punishment.

Zuma, 82, was convicted of contempt after he refused to testify at a judicial inquiry into wide-scale corruption during his nine-year tenure as president. His arrest in 2021 triggered the worst civil

disorder since the apartheid era, in which more than 350 people died. Zuma was freed on medical parole after serving barely two months of a 15-month sentence. While the courts ruled that his release was unlawful, he was granted clemency by President Ramaphosa in November last year.

Zuma's new party, uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK), is a breakaway from the ruling African National Congress. Under Zuma's leadership, MK has eaten into the ANC's voter base, especially in Zuma's KwaZulu-Natal stronghold.

After the ruling, a senior MK official urged its supporters to "relax" and said there were no plans to protest. Zuma was still running the party even if he was banned from returning to parliament, Sihle Ngubane, the secretary-general, said outside the court in Johannesburg. "He will give us direction from here on. He is still in charge and he will tell us what to do. Zuma is still in control of this party."

Polls predict that the ANC could lose

its overall national majority for the first time since it came to power in 1994 and be forced to negotiate a coalition. After a general election, the president is chosen by MPs.

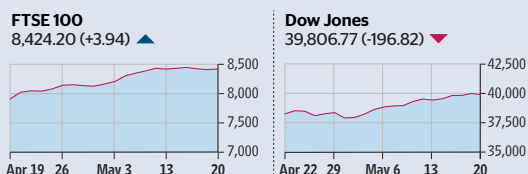
On Saturday more than 30,000 supporters turned out to cheer Zuma at a rally at a stadium in Soweto, near Johannesburg. Ballot papers for the vote have already been printed with Zuma's photograph next to his party's name.

Analysts had speculated whether Zuma had any political ambition beyond taking votes from his former party in revenge for being forced to resign as president in 2018 when corruption allegations mounted against him. If he returned to parliament, Zuma would have to give up the allowances he enjoys as a former president.

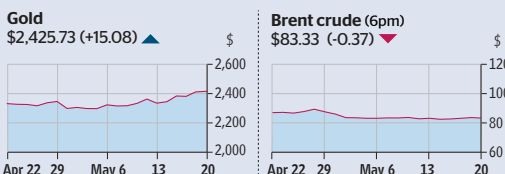
Ramaphosa, who succeeded Zuma as party and national leader, said he was not worried that the judgment would spark unrest. "Should there be any threat of violence our security forces are ready," he said in a radio interview.

Business

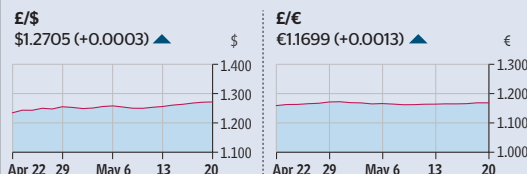
WORLD MARKETS (Change on the day)



COMMODITIES



CURRENCIES



Bank could cut interest rates this summer, says deputy governor

Jack Barnett
Economics Correspondent

The Bank of England could reduce interest rates this summer, according to a deputy governor at the central bank. Ben Broadbent said that if inflation continued to ease, “it’s possible [rates] could be cut some time in the summer”.

The comments are the latest indication that the Bank’s rate-setting monetary policy committee (MPC) is edging

closer to a loosening of policy for the first time since March 2020, possibly as soon as its next meeting on June 20.

The MPC’s members voted 7-2 to hold borrowing costs at 5.25 per cent at its last meeting this month, with Sir Dave Ramsden and Swati Dhingra voting for a 0.25 percentage point cut.

Figures released by the Office for National Statistics tomorrow are expected to show that inflation slid to 2.1 per cent in April from 3.2 per cent the

previous month, thanks to a sharp fall in energy prices. City analysts believe there is a chance that the rate dropped to the Bank’s 2 per cent target for the first time since July 2021.

Broadbent said the risk had receded that high inflation was now embedded in the UK economy by continued rapid wage rises and companies lifting prices. He added that “the direct effect on inflation of the pandemic and the war [in Ukraine] has now faded”.

However, he highlighted that it was “unclear” how long it would take for “second-round” inflationary pressures to unwind.

On the other hand, he said, businesses “feel less able than they did last year” to pass through high costs via price increases, signalling that future inflation was likely to ease.

Tomasz Wieladek, chief European economist at T Rowe Price, said that Broadbent “chose to put a bit more em-

phasis on the dovish arguments of the monetary policy debate”, reinforcing the view that the Bank would loosen policy next month.

Household living standards have been hit hard by a sharp increase in prices over the past three years. Across the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the UK has had the third-biggest inflation shock, with prices up by more than a fifth compared with March 2021.

Audit firms missed 75% of collapses

Demand for reforms to address ‘poor standards’

Tom Howard

Britain’s audit firms failed to raise the alarm for three quarters of the big companies that have gone bust over the past decade, renewing concerns that the industry is not doing enough to weed out looming corporate collapses.

A report from the Audit Reform Lab, a think tank at the University of Sheffield, shows that of the 250 largest companies listed on the London stock market to have gone under between 2010 and 2022, only a quarter of them had a “going concern” warning included by auditors in what would turn out to be their final set of accounts.

Adam Leaver, director of the Audit Reform Lab, has urged the next government to finally bring through the “far-reaching reforms” of the audit industry that have been repeatedly pushed back. “The UK audit sector is plagued by poor standards, a toothless regulator, conflicts of interests and weak sanctions for malpractice,” Leaver said. “Auditors are failing to show independent judgment or professional scepticism — both are non-negotiable features of their job. Reform has been long promised and is long overdue.”

Among the companies to have collapsed since 2010 are Thomas Cook, the travel group; BHS, the department store chain; and Carillion, the construction contractor.

This month the Financial Reporting Council (FRC) laid bare the shortcomings of KPMG’s audits of Carillion. Emails showed audit staff joking to each other that their work was “more Mills & Boon than Shakespeare”, while

the main audit partner allowed his juniors to get his laptop and sign off work he should have done.

The purpose of an audit is to get an idea as to whether a company is faring as well as its management says, so giving confidence to shareholders, suppliers and customers. But Leaver suggested “auditors are ... incentivised to maintain good client relationships, rather than apply the principles of professional scepticism and enforce prudence”.

His team found EY to be the worst performer. Of the big companies it audited that ended up going under, it provided a going concern notice — in essence, a warning that the firm could soon go bankrupt — in only 20 per cent of cases. PwC, Britain’s top audit firm based on fee income, fared little better, flagging its concerns in 23 per cent of cases. Deloitte and KPMG scored higher but only on 36 per cent and 38 per cent of occasions, respectively.

Those firms make up the Big Four of auditing, between them signing off the accounts of most of Britain’s largest companies. In 2022, they collected 98 per cent of all the audit fees paid by FTSE 350 firms.

Leaver wants the next government to finally establish the Audit, Reporting and Governance Authority — a beefed-up version of the existing FRC. He is also calling for bigger fines for firms when they get it wrong, and for the legal separation of audit and non-audit services within firms to remove potential conflicts of interest.

Deloitte, EY, KPMG and PwC declined to comment. The FRC was approached for comment.



In bloom Trinnny Woodall, founder of the skincare and make-up brand Trinnny London, opened a pop-up store for the start of the Chelsea Flower Show today

Ashley seeks tie-up with Crown Estate

Jessica Newman

Mike Ashley is eyeing up a stake in Exeter’s Princesshay estate, The Times has learnt, in what would be the first joint venture between the retail mogul and the King’s property company.

Fraser’s, the FTSE 100 retailer majority-owned by Ashley, “is the frontrunner” to buy a 50 per cent interest in the estate from Nuveen, a retail property source said.

Nuveen, which bought its stake from Land Securities a decade ago, put its share up for sale this year with a reported asking price of £40 million. The other half of the scheme is owned by the Crown Estate, known as the King’s property group because its income supports the royal family.

The Princesshay estate contains the Princesshay shopping centre, a number of other retail and leisure properties and two car parks. The shopping centre is home to more than 60 brands, including Apple, Next and Zara. The estate produces a total gross income of more than £9.1 million a year.

Last year, Fraser’s bought The Mall shopping centre in Luton from Capital & Regional for £58 million and the Overgate Centre in Dundee for £30 million. At the time Fraser’s, in which Ashley, 59, owns a stake of about 73 per cent, said those acquisitions reflected “confidence in the future of the UK high street”. It also bought Junction 32, an outlet shopping centre in West Yorkshire, for £50 million, and more recently had considered a bid for the Meadowhall shopping centre in Sheffield.

The buying spree has prompted questions over whether Fraser’s, which owns brands including Sports Direct, Flannels and Jack Wills, is buying shopping centres to then fill them with stores from its own portfolio.

One property source said that if Fraser’s got a deal done, it would mark the first time the company has taken a passive interest in an asset, “probably with the hope of renegotiating it”.

Fraser’s declined to comment. British Land exits Meadowhall, page 39

Business

Need to know

1 Self-driving cars have been given the green light to operate on British roads within two years, after a bill aimed at regulating the vehicles passed into law. The Automated Vehicles Act paves the way for the introduction of "level four" fully autonomous vehicles on the roads. Such vehicles do not require a "safety driver", allowing motorists to become passengers in their own cars. **Page 8**

2 Britain's audit firms failed to raise the alarm for three quarters of the big companies that have gone bust over the past decade, renewing concerns that the industry is not doing enough to weed out looming corporate collapses. **Page 31**

3 The Bank of England could cut interest rates this summer if inflation continues to ease, according to Ben Broadbent, a deputy governor. His comments are the latest indication that the Bank's monetary policy committee is edging closer to a loosening of policy for the first time since March 2020, possibly as soon as its next meeting in June. **Page 31**

4 Mike Ashley is said to be eyeing up a stake in Exeter's Princesshay estate, in what would be the first joint venture between the retail mogul and the King's property company. Frasers, majority-owned by Ashley, "is the frontrunner" to buy a 50 per cent interest from Nuveen. The other half of the scheme is owned by the Crown Estate. **Page 31**

5 Ryanair said that higher interest rates and weak consumer confidence could explain why growth in airfares has been slower than expected during the peak summer season. Europe's largest airline said that growth in ticket prices would be flat to "modestly ahead" of last summer, rather than the 5 per cent to 10 per cent increase that had been anticipated as recently as April.

6 Shares in Keywords Studios jumped by more than 60 per cent at one stage yesterday after the computer games business confirmed that it was in advanced takeover talks with EQT, the giant private equity firm.

7 British workers with specialist skills in artificial intelligence can command a salary 14 per cent higher than their peers, according to a big study from PwC, the professional services firm. **Page 34**

8 AstraZeneca is planning to build a \$1.5 billion manufacturing facility in Singapore as it looks to bolster its pipeline of next-generation cancer drugs. **Page 34**

9 More than four in ten of Britain's listed retailers have warned over profits in the past year as households cut their spending, according to research that underlines the stress on the consumer sector. **Page 37**

10 British Land has sold its share of Sheffield's Meadowhall shopping centre to its joint-venture partner in a deal that underscores the sharp decline in retail property values. **Page 39**

Consumers can't afford higher fares, says Ryanair

Emma Powell

Ryanair said that higher interest rates and weak consumer confidence could explain why growth in airfares has been slower than expected during the peak summer season.

The warning sounded a rare note of caution in an industry that has boomed over the past year as demand from travellers bounced back rapidly after the pandemic, while capacity remains constrained.

Europe's largest airline said that growth in ticket prices would be flat to "modestly ahead" of last summer, rather than the 5 per cent to 10 per cent increase that had been anticipated as recently as April.

Michael O'Leary, the budget airline's chief executive, said: "We put that down to lack of consumer spending, consumer confidence, higher interest rates... we think that will repair later on this year when interest rates begin to fall off and people begin to realise they have a bit more money in their pockets."

The Irish executive also pointed to average fare rises of 20 per cent over the previous two summers, which would be hard to sustain.

However, the airline has started to discount fares recently. "We've had a number of seat sales in the last couple of weeks, after not managing to do much on pricing for the last 12 to 18 months post-Covid," O'Leary, 63, said.

June booking numbers are about 1 per cent ahead of last year but average airfares are 5 per cent lower, O'Leary said. However, there are tentative signs of stronger demand over July, August and September, when bookings are 4 per cent ahead of last year and fares are also 5 per cent higher.

The ultimate outcome for airline growth could depend on last-minute ticket sales.

The warning came as the budget air-

line announced profits for the year to March 2024 that were about a third higher year-on-year at €1.92 billion and ahead of market expectations. Passenger numbers were up by 9 per cent on the previous year at 183.7 million, a total that was also 24 per cent ahead of the pre-pandemic level, after it opened new routes to cities including Basel, Belfast and Tirana over the winter.

A record first half of the year and strong Easter sales pushed the average airfare up by 21 per cent to €49.80, despite softer than anticipated sales in the months since then.

The Dublin-based group did not give financial guidance for the present year, but said that passenger numbers would be up by 8 per cent on last year at between 198 million and 200 million.

Ryanair's ambitious expansion plans have been hampered by delays in the delivery of new Boeing planes. In March, it cut the number of passengers it expected to fly during the summer on the back of delays in deliveries of new Boeing 737 Max planes, as a result of fresh safety concerns.

Of the 210 new 737 Max jets on order by the end of 2025, 146 have so far been delivered, which the company expects to increase to 158 by the end of July — still 23 short of the contracted number.

O'Leary said he was confident that there would be no further delays in new aircraft due by the end of July. "The question now is how much Boeing can accelerate those deliveries for summer 2025... Today I'd be hopeful but I wouldn't be confident."

The shortfall will increase the airline's unit costs over the first half of the



Michael O'Leary said ticket prices would be "moderately



current financial year as it carries the burden of having recruited pilots and cabin crew to staff the new Boeing planes it had been expected to fly. Ryanair had received a "small amount of compensation" but not enough to cover the loss of revenue, O'Leary explained.

He said he welcomed the management changes at Boeing, with the US plane manufacturer announcing last month that Dave Calhoun, its chief executive, would step down at the end of the year. It had also appointed Stephan-

ie Pope as head of its commercial aircraft unit a month earlier.

O'Leary said: "The good thing about Stephanie is that she's there in Seattle day in, day out — she's eating, breathing, sleeping the place. Whereas with the previous management, those guys who were on tour around the world having lunches and dinners, nobody was actually sitting in Seattle worrying about production and quality."

Peak summer airfares would move "moderately up again as demand recovers but capacity doesn't" over the next two or three summers, O'Leary said, partly due to delivery delays from both Boeing and Airbus as well as capacity leaving the market during Covid.

Amber Rudd, a former home secre-

Keywords Studios shares surge on takeover talks

Katie Prescott
Technology Business Editor

Shares in Keywords Studios jumped by more than 60 per cent at one stage yesterday after it confirmed that it was in advanced takeover talks with one of the world's largest private equity firms.

EQT, a Swedish investor, is weighing up a cash offer of £25.50 per share for the computer games business, following four previously rejected and unsuccessful proposals.

Keywords' share price has been under pressure over the past year as investors weigh up whether it is likely to be a victim of the surge in generative artificial intelligence. Until yesterday's bounce precipitated by the takeover bid, shares had fallen by about 50 per cent since May last year.

In response to the confirmation of talks the shares rose by 81.2p, or 55.2 per cent, to close at £22.82 in London. The

Aim-listed company provides services to the video games industry, including around artwork, translation and music creation.

As AI's ability to automate creative content continues to improve, some have argued that this could overtake the capabilities of Keywords employees and suppress growth.

Katie Cousins, at Shore Capital, said that the company's shares had been "weak following the highs of the pandemic" and that "along with an unfavourable narrative around potential AI threats, Keywords has struggled to regain investor confidence".

Alasdair Young, who covers the gaming sector at Panmure Gordon, believes that Keywords could benefit from generative AI because of its leading position in the market, adding that it had "all of this proprietary data with which to train their models".

He said that the company was never

an obvious takeover target until the valuation got to "silly" levels. "While this possible offer is around a 130 per cent premium to where the shares traded only one month ago (74 per cent higher than Friday's close), it is still only where the shares traded in early May 2023," he said. "If made, we think the offer goes through."

In a statement to the market, Keywords said that shareholders on the register on May 24, 2024 would be entitled to receive the 2023 final dividend of 1.76p, payable on June 28.

Keywords, whose headquarters are in Dublin, was founded in 1998 and floated in London in 2013 with a market capitalisation of £50 million. It provides services to 24 of the top 25 most prominent games companies with clients including Activision Blizzard, Electronic Arts, Epic Games, Microsoft, Netflix, Tencent and Ubisoft. It has 70 facilities in 26 countries across Asia, Australia,

the Americas and Europe, working on titles including *Diablo IV*, *Hogwarts Legacy* and *League of Legends*.

In its latest full-year results, published in March, its revenue was €780 million — up 13 per cent from €691 million previously — with an adjusted profit before tax of €115 million, almost flat on 2023.

EQT, founded in Sweden more than 30 years ago, has been investing in the UK for nearly two decades. It made its first investment in 2006 when it acquired SSP Group, which operates food outlets in travel hubs, and subsequently listed the business.

Most recently it acquired the pet pharmaceuticals business Dechra and it has more than 15 other portfolio companies based in the UK. It is backed by 1,000 institutional investors, with 30 per cent of funds raised in the Americas. It said that it was "supportive" of Keywords' strategy.



FABIO FRUSTACI/EPA; BRADLEY CASLIN/GETTY IMAGES

'Inventor of bitcoin' given court rebuke

Tom Saunders

An Australian computer scientist who claimed to have invented bitcoin has been accused of a "most serious abuse" of court process by a High Court judge in his failed attempt to be recognised as the cryptocurrency's founder.

Mr Justice Mellor said that Craig Wright, 53, had "lied to the court extensively and repeatedly" and that he was satisfied that some of the evidence Wright had supplied had been "forged on a grand scale".

Since 2016, Wright has publicly claimed to be the true figure behind Satoshi Nakamoto, the author of the 2008 academic paper that serves as the foundational text for bitcoin.

Wright, who lives in Surrey, has also claimed intellectual property rights over the currency and sued other developers and companies claiming copyright infringement. His actions eventually led the Crypto Open Patent Alliance (Copa) — a non-profit group that counts the Twitter founder Jack Dorsey and Coinbase, the cryptocurrency exchange platform, among its members — to bring a case against Wright in the High Court in London, asking it to rule that he was not Nakamoto.

In March, the judge issued a short ruling saying that Wright was not Nakamoto, nor was he the author of the initial versions of bitcoin software.

In his full written judgement, published yesterday, the judge went considerably further, claiming that Wright had engaged in the "deliberate production of false documents to support false claims" and had used the courts "as a vehicle for fraud".

Phil Sherrell, a partner at Bird & Bird who acted for Copa in the case, said: "I can't remember reading a judgment in such emphatic terms with lying and forgery of this extent."

The identity of currency's founder remains unknown as the case focused on the truth of Wright's claims rather than who Nakamoto really was. However, Nakamoto, or at least his nature, still played an outsized role in the trial. "Satoshi was always very clear that he was releasing bitcoin on an open-source basis and that he didn't want it to be controlled by anybody," Sherrell said. "The very essence of Wright's claims in recent years has been that he owns all of these IP rights and he is entitled to control and that was always antithetical to Satoshi's vision."

O'Leary's big prize on the horizon

BUSINESS COMMENTARY Alistair Osborne



European domination every year. No issues over financial fair play, let alone copping 115 charges. And a soaring style based on endless action from the wings.

In many ways, Michael O'Leary is already surpassing the feats of the "unique manager", as he calls him, at the team he supports. Yet there's one area where Pep clearly has the upper hand: landing trophies.

The Ryanair boss has been shooting for a single prize since 2019: a €100 million payday, dependent on him doubling the airline's net profits to €2.2 billion by 2028 — or its shares to €21 and keeping them at that altitude for 28 days. Like the shot-down Gunners, he's got within touching distance too: the Dublin-listed shares briefly topped €21 only last month. But, as O'Leary says of his incentive plan: "While I'll work very hard for it, I live in fear that I'm just about to reach it and there'll be some war or pestilence or downturn."

Or even something less dramatic. In recent weeks the shares have dropped to €18.10, slipping another 1 per cent on full-year figures starting a 34 per cent rise in net profits to €1.92 billion. The key reason for the lower-flying shares? "Softer" summer fares than O'Leary or the market expected, plus more aircraft delivery delays from Boeing.

O'Leary, who owns 3.9 per cent of the shares and is on €1.2 million a year basic pay, is typically forthright about his potential rewards. "Everybody expects you to be out there apologising for your pay or your share options. Yet no one ever says boo about Pep or Klopp getting about €25 million a year. The London Stock Exchange would be a lot stronger if there wasn't so much bullshit about executive pay." Should he hit his goal it would be well-deserved, too: the man who's built the business over 28 years would have delivered more than €10 billion of extra value since 2019. Yet, even if a €700 million share buyback may help, he's first got to ride out the present turbulence.

After two post-Covid summers of 20 per cent-plus fare rises, O'Leary says there was "no way we were going to have a third". But he still expected "5 per cent to 10 per cent". That's now looking like "zero to 5 per cent" given "the recessionary feel out there across Europe". Not that that should trouble Europe's best-financed airline: one with the lowest cost base, €1.37 billion year-end net cash and a 556-strong fleet of owned aircraft, unencumbered by leasing costs. As O'Leary puts it: "We do best when pricing is softer because the competition can't live with us on pricing."

Boeing remains an irritant, though. While Ryanair expects to have 158 737 Max planes in the fleet by the end of July, that's a shortfall of 23: the difference between flying 205 million passengers this financial year and possibly only 198 million. The carrier's costs will be higher, too, given it got itself "fully crewed" for the extra planes. O'Leary says Boeing's management shake-up has brought recent "progress", not least with the new commercial airline chief Stephanie Pope staying in

Seattle and "getting on with the job" unlike her predecessor "Stan Deal, who was flying around the world having lunches and dinners".

One other intriguing point too: O'Leary says that, off worse margins, America's Southwest trades on an earnings multiple of 17 times versus Ryanair's nine. So, if there was ever a change in the European airline share ownership rules that force Ryanair to be majority owned in the EU, "we would seriously look at relisting in the States". Indeed, over there, O'Leary would already have got his payout. Still, surely he can do a Pep by this time next year. It's in investors' interests, as well as his, that he finally lands his trophy.

At the controls

Talk about setting an example. Look who chairs the video game servicing outfit

Keywords Studios. None other than Don Robert of Experian fame: a chap who doubles up as chairman of the London Stock Exchange Group, the owner of the UK's shrinking market, where there's a dearth of floats and companies keep getting taken out, often by private equity.

So, anyway, what's our Don doing to help? That's right: he's flogging Keywords to private equity, in this case European firm EQT, for €2.2 billion cash. Or, to quote the key words in the board's statement, it's "minded to recommend" EQT's €25.50-a-share tilt, should it turn it into a real offer.

To be fair to Robert, he's done a good job in talking EQT up, batting away four previous proposals. And the mooted bid's at a 73 per cent premium: the sort any board would struggle not to put to shareholders. It was enough too to send the shares up 55 per cent to €22.82.

Even so, Aim-listed Keywords, now operating in 26 countries, is an example of how the stock market is supposed to work. Floated in 2013 at 123p and valued at just £50 million, it's used its listed paper to expand via more than 65 acquisitions. It's now the market leader, providing everything from creative to translation services to the likes of Microsoft, Epic Games and Netflix.

To boot, it was only in March last year that the shares hit £29.92 — before the market got itself in a funk over the threat from AI. But last year's adjusted operating profits still rose 6.5 per cent to €122 million and Pannure Gordon has kept its £28.50 target price. So, no knockout bid, even if Robert may be game for it.

Mask slips

What a bombshell. Not only is Craig Wright, an Aussie computer scientist living in Surrey, not the as-yet unmasked bitcoin inventor Satoshi Nakamoto, he also "lied ... repeatedly" to the High Court, with some of his evidence "forged on a grand scale". Or so said the judge. To think this could go on in the genteel world of cryptocurrencies. Even Sam Bankman-Fried would be shocked.

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Share price



tary and energy and climate change secretary, has been appointed to the board as a non-executive director, alongside Jinane Laghrari Laabi, a former partner at McKinsey and a

Moroccan national. The appointments were part of efforts to improve the diversity of the board both in terms of nationality and gender, O'Leary said.

A vocal critic of Brexit, he said of Rudd: "We've always admired her. We think she was a very effective MP [and] minister. We think she was on the right side of the whole Brexit debate."

The airline announced that it would buy back a further €700 million in shares, a scheme that will be launched this week. A final dividend of 17.8 cents a share is due to be paid in September.

The Dublin-listed shares closed down 24 cents, or 1.3 per cent, at €18.10, while the London-listed shares of rival low-cost carrier easyJet closed down 16p, or 3.2 per cent, at 475p.

Anglo American investor backs break-up

Emma Powell

One of Anglo American's largest shareholders has publicly backed the FTSE 100 mining company's break-up plan, just two days before the deadline for BHP to either make a formal offer for the group or walk away.

Last week the 107-year-old miner announced a drastic separation plan under which its platinum, diamond and steelmaking coal businesses would either be spun off or sold in an attempt to fend off a takeover by its larger Australian rival.

Nick Stansbury, head of climate solutions at Legal & General Investment Management (LGIM), said that the plan outlined by the London-listed miner was "a radical but attractive strategy to create value for long-term investors".

LGIM controls 1.8 per cent of Anglo American, making it one of the largest

shareholders in the company, as well as 0.8 per cent of BHP.

Analysts and investors have questioned whether the separation proposals will unlock value for shareholders, including what price the company might be able to realise for Amplats, its platinum mining unit, and De Beers, the famed diamonds business, in the face of a slump in both their respective markets.

"We agree the execution of this plan will be challenging for management to deliver on but we are confident in their ability to do so over time," Stansbury said.

Anglo American rejected a second and improved £34 billion all-share offer last week, which it said continued to "significantly undervalue Anglo American and its future prospects". The offer is conditional on the spinoff of Anglo's South African iron ore and platinum businesses, which has also drawn criti-

cism from some investors and South African officials.

Mike Henry, 57, chief executive of BHP, has described Anglo American's refusal to engage in discussions as "disappointing".

Stansbury said the present offers from BHP "are far from reflecting fair value for the business".

He added: "For a takeover offer to be attractive, an offer would need to be at a reasonable premium to fair value."

"Our discussions with Anglo American indicate that their board are acting appropriately with regards to the level of engagement they are having with BHP. We do not see a clear reason for the Anglo board to change their stance in this regard unless an offer that represents a reasonable premium to the underlying fair value of the assets Anglo holds is proposed."

Anglo American and BHP declined to comment.

Business

AI skills can boost your pay by up to 60%

Katie Prescott
Technology Business Editor

British workers with specialist skills in artificial intelligence can command a salary 14 per cent higher than their peers, according to a big study from PwC, the professional services firm.

Lawyers with AI skills are being offered about 27 per cent more than those without, while database designers and administrators can command a premium of about 60 per cent on their salary.

The report, which analysed half a billion job adverts from 15 countries, lays bare the extent of the demand from businesses for knowledge of the technology. It found that the number of recruitment ads calling for AI experience

has grown by three and a half times over the past decade, while job posts in areas exposed to AI, such as customer service, are slowing.

In contrast, yoga teachers, funeral arrangers and those performing laser hair removal — jobs protected from the threat of automation — are in high demand, giving what the report called “clues to which skills workers may want to build to prosper in an AI age”.

At odds with some of the widespread concerns about the painful impact of artificial intelligence on the labour market, PwC’s first global AI jobs barometer painted a positive picture of a future where the technology is integrated into the workplace. Calling AI the “industrial revolution of knowledge

work”, it found that sectors more likely to be affected by the technology, such as financial services, IT and professional services, were experiencing a near-fivefold increase in productivity growth compared with less exposed sectors.

The paper argued that this increase highlighted the potential of AI to address the UK’s productivity challenges, potentially bridging the economic gap with other nations and improving living standards. Rather than “just doing the old things faster”, the report said efficiency was about “finding new, AI-powered ways to create value”.

It also found that in some economies facing shrinking working-age populations, AI could help to offset the employee shortfall in many sectors. Barret

Kupelian, chief economist at PwC UK, said: “Our findings show that AI has the power to create new industries, transform the jobs market and potentially push up productivity growth rates. We are only seeing the tip of the iceberg. As AI technology improves and spreads across more sectors, its economic impact could be truly transformative.”

Not all studies are so optimistic. The Institute for Public Policy Research found that eight million UK jobs could be at risk from AI without government intervention, with women and young people most affected. It said that back-office, entry-level and part-time jobs, including secretarial, customer service and administrative roles, were at the highest risk of disruption. Kupelian

noted that AI was already reshaping the labour market, saying: “The skills required by employers in AI-exposed occupations are changing about 25 per cent faster than in those less exposed. This trend is likely to intensify, creating new roles while reducing demand for some skills that AI can perform more efficiently.”

Companies such as Klarna, the payment business, have stated that they are replacing hundreds of customer service jobs with the technology, which is quickly becoming more sophisticated.

Allison Kirkby, BT’s new chief executive, said recently that AI was already making the company’s technology developers 12 per cent more efficient by supporting their coding work.

Tensions push gold price to new high

The price of gold reached a record and silver hit its highest level since 2012 as growing interest from China and wider geopolitical tensions pushed “safe haven” metals to new heights (Tom Saunders writes).

Spot gold prices reached a record of \$2,427.21 per ounce at midday yesterday, while spot prices for silver reached their highest value since December 2012 at \$32.28 per ounce.

The death of President Raisi of Iran in a helicopter crash on Sunday, along with the war in Gaza, have contributed to surging precious metal prices.

Another key contributor to the rise of gold, and more recently silver, has been greater demand from China. The country’s central bank topped up its gold reserves for an 18th straight month in April, although the pace of buying has since slowed amid record prices. However, greater retail and institutional



Chinese retail investors have been buying gold and silver as enthusiastically as the country’s central bank amid geopolitical tensions

interest from the country has also underpinned the metal’s rise.

Ross Norman, a veteran precious metals trader, said: “The People’s Bank of China has been buying consistently ... on top of that you’ve had strong retail buying.

“The normal buyer is the *dama*, or Chinese grandmother, and she’s been joined by millennials.”

Increased demand from the country has gone some way to explain why gold has continued to rise despite the fact that rate expectations have

become increasingly hawkish, with the market only expecting one cut by the US Federal Reserve this year. Conventionally, higher interest rates spark investment into yield-generating assets such as bonds, rather than gold.

Gold’s latest record

price comes off the back of a largely unbroken run since February this year, in which the metal has repeatedly broken its all-time high.

Philip Newman, managing director of Metals Focus, a consultancy, said: “Even though we still

keep thinking there’ll be a correction, no one wants to bet against the market.”

The price rises sent a surge through some London-listed miners. Fresnillo shares rose by 4 per cent, while Weir Group, a mining equipment company, was up 3.8 per cent.

Uber to offer incentives to go all-electric

Robert Lea Industrial Editor

Londoners used to their Uber driver arriving in a Toyota Prius may soon find them at the wheel of an electric Kia instead.

Uber, the app-based taxi service, is to offer more than 35,000 of its drivers in London up to £22,000 in grants and discounts to ditch their hybrids and diesel and petrol cars and switch to all-electric.

The digital taxi service plans to make its fleet of 50,000 vehicles in the capital zero-emission by the end of 2025; only a quarter are currently running on full-electric.

The ambitious plan will come with significant incentives. The \$140 billion US-listed multinational will this week launch an initiative to offer grants of £5,000 to make sure that each of its London drivers switches to battery electric over the next 18 months or so. It will be funded via a £145 million fund Uber has built up in the UK from previously levying a green surcharge.

Uber has obtained large discounts

£12,000

Discount awarded to Uber drivers for the Kia Niro EV

Source: Uber

from manufacturers. A driver with an eye on a £56,000 Kia EV6 will, with a £17,000 discount from the Korean manufacturer plus their £5,000 handout from Uber, be able to acquire it for £34,000.

The most popular electric Uber on the streets, the Kia Niro EV will, with a £12,000 discount, be available for £20,000.

“Now is the time to speed up on electrification, not slow down,” said Andrew Brem, general manager of Uber UK, in reference to the recent stalling of electric car sales in Britain primarily over affordability concerns.

The willingness of manufacturers to back the scheme comes as they struggle to hit government-enforced quotas for this year, with carmakers having to ensure that 22 per cent of all their cars are electric this year or face penalties. That quota will rise to 28 per cent next year.

UK sales data this year indicates that the growth in the sale of new electric cars to private motorists is in reverse because of the upfront cost of the vehicles.

AstraZeneca plans \$1.5bn drugs plant in Singapore

Jessica Newman

AstraZeneca is planning to build a \$1.5 billion manufacturing facility in Singapore as it looks to bolster its pipeline of next-generation cancer drugs.

The plant will be the FTSE 100 group’s first end-to-end facility for so-called antibody-drug conjugates (ADCs) and is scheduled to open in 2029. It has been backed by Singapore’s economic development board, although the company did not provide details on any possible incentives it would receive from the local govern-

ment. ADCs — artificial antibodies that directly target cancer cells — are designed to reduce the toxicity of treatment.

Britain’s largest pharmaceutical group has been expanding into markets such as China, Indonesia and India over the past few years in an effort to widen its supply chain. Enhertu, a breast cancer therapy that slows the spread of the disease, is made by its partner Daiichi Sankyo in Japan.

Sir Pascal Soriot, AstraZeneca’s chief executive, said that the Cambridge-based company’s portfolio of cancer

treatments, including ADCs, “have shown enormous potential to replace traditional chemotherapy for patients across many settings”.

He added: “Singapore is one of the world’s most attractive countries for investment given its reputation for excellence in complex manufacturing, and I am excited for AstraZeneca to locate our \$1.5 billion ADC manufacturing facility in the country.”

AstraZeneca announced a £650 million investment in its UK operations in March, with the bulk of the money being spent at its vaccine manufactur-

ing site in Speke, Liverpool. The decision marked a notable thawing after Soriot, 64, had previously blamed Britain’s uncompetitive tax policies for its decision to invest \$360 million in a manufacturing facility in the Republic of Ireland instead of the UK.

The Singapore announcement came before an investor day at its Discovery Centre research base in Cambridge, at which the group will present its “road map” for growth to 2030.

AstraZeneca’s share price, which has risen by 12 per cent this year, dipped by 14p, or 0.1 per cent, to close at £120.96.

Mehreen Khan

US tariffs against China are about more than economics



“ Sweeping US tariffs against clean energy technologies from China represent the latest ratcheting up of the Biden administration's trade weaponry against its biggest geopolitical rival. But does it amount to anything of economic significance?

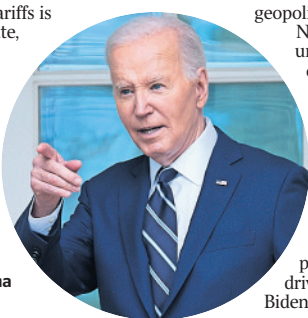
The White House's decision to slap larger tariffs on specific Chinese goods worth \$18 billion will not be a game-changer for trade flows. The most eye-catching measure is a 100 per cent import tariff on Chinese electric vehicles. But China sells next to no EVs in the United States, where only 2 per cent of all imported battery-powered cars, worth about \$400 million, are Chinese.

Chinese carmakers have stayed away from the US after the Trump tariffs of 2018-19 and instead focused on penetrating European markets with their cheaper and often better-quality vehicles. As for Biden's other tariff hikes on solar panels, lithium batteries and semiconductors, neither will these have a sizeable impact on trade flows given the host of previous tariff measures, trade restrictions and domestic subsidies that the federal government is using to undercut Chinese competition.

All in all, the total negative impact on US growth from Biden's tariff package is estimated at about 0.1 percentage points to GDP this year, a rounding error. The impact on consumer price inflation is in the same range, according to calculations from Oxford Economics, which thinks the trade measures will have “no implications for monetary policy ... the tariffs will not provide additional ammunition to justify keeping interest rates high for longer”.

Biden's bark on tariffs is stronger than his bite, as you may expect from a pre-election strategy to show American voters that the Democrats will be no less aggressive towards Beijing than Donald

Biden is keen to avoid another “China shock” in the US



Trump is threatening to be. What is more interesting is the justification used by US officials for the timing of the tariffs. Lael Brainard, the White House's national economic adviser, said last week: “We have learnt from the past — there can be no second China shock here in America. It is vital to use legitimate enforcement tools to make sure a second China shock does not happen again.”

To understand why the US is so frightened of a “second China shock”, it is worth looking back at the lessons learnt from the first. The initial China shock refers to the findings from a seminal academic paper published in 2016, which laid out the costs of China's entry into the World Trade Organisation and its low-cost export model on the US economy. The authors found the US economy lost two million jobs between 1997 and 2011 as a result of China's export strategy, with just under a million jobs lost in the manufacturing sector.

The reverberations of the China shock include a three-decade period of disinflation and falling real incomes, concentrated de-industrialisation in rust-belt US states and links to the explosion in opioid use, mental health problems and status-decline for working-class Americans over the past two decades.

The China shock has become a neuralgic, epoch-defining mistake in the eyes of US Democrats and Republicans, both of whom are determined not to create the conditions to allow it to repeat again.

Warnings about a second China shock are centred on Beijing's shift from exporting cheap household items, furniture and clothing to the advanced manufacturing of solar cells, batteries and EVs, where it has stolen a march on its geopolitical rivals.

Not only is the US unwilling to be reliant on China for industrial goods, it does not want to pay Beijing for the privilege of carrying out a climate transition, losing high-skilled, high-wage jobs to the country in the process. This is the driving force behind Biden's Chips Act, the \$1

trillion Inflation Reduction Act and ratcheting of tariffs on China's clean tech industry.

The China shock 2.0 has also given birth to a geo-economic “trilemma” for advanced economies, which are managing the competing demands of maintaining open trade, keeping inflation low and achieving domestic net-zero targets. Most governments have decided they can't have all three at the same time. The US has moved decisively to dump free trade to help it achieve the other two.

The trilemma is most acute for countries in the European Union, rather than the US, as its economic model and political rhetoric is avowedly free trade, pro-climate and relies on an inflation strategy where 20 countries do not have direct control over their monetary policy.

Dumping free trade and resorting to US-style protectionism is a much costlier path for the Europeans who fear being in the crosshairs of Chinese retaliation. It's no surprise that the leaders of Germany and France have both had meetings with President Xi of China in April and May, respectively. It's not clear how the EU finds a way out of its trilemma, beyond hoping, as many economists still do, that there is no need to sacrifice any of free trade, low inflation or a net-zero transition. For most of the macroeconomics profession, allowing China to pioneer clean energy technologies will only lower the cost of batteries and clean cars, creating a disinflationary force and speeding up emissions reduction in rich and poor countries. Everyone should be a winner, in theory.

The trilemma is not only about economic outcomes but the domestic political, social and geopolitical consequences of letting the market rip. The first China shock exposed the painful social costs of “adjustment” in richer advanced economies, where it was predominantly working classes who felt the brunt of the profound economic shifts caused by China's export dominance. Biden and others do not want to risk another era of adjustment that unleashes political forces that can't be controlled.

Mehreen Khan is Economics Editor of *The Times*

Jamie Thompson

A Trump presidency could affect Britain more than our election

The British economy is showing renewed signs of life. Growth rebounded impressively in the first quarter of the year and business surveys suggest that the momentum is being maintained. After two years of stagnation, a sustained recovery in economic growth may finally be under way.

The global economy is also proving more resilient than many expected. The latest reading of the Global Business Sentiment Index — a survey-based gauge of growth expectations from Oxford Economics — suggests that businesses deem a solid pace of expansion as most likely in the year ahead, despite the recent increase in tensions in the Middle East.

Concerns have not eased completely, however. Businesses

‘Whichever UK party is victorious will be hamstrung by our structurally weak public finances’

remain uneasy about the potential for international developments that could temper the pace of recovery.

In its latest assessment of economic conditions, the Bank of England highlights a similar risk, focusing in particular on the potential fallout from an escalation of the Israel-Hamas war. But one key risk is conspicuous by its absence. The Bank's 88-page report contains not a single word on the economic consequences of forthcoming elections.

The reluctance of the UK's central bank to dwell on our own general election is unsurprising. Whichever party is victorious will be hamstrung by the UK's structurally weak public finances and the constraints of our fiscal rules.

November's US presidential election may prove rather more impactful. A return of Donald Trump to the White House, and Republican majorities in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, would have wide-ranging consequences for American policy and material effects on economic activity around the world. Trump's

threat of a trade war, in particular, should set the alarm bells ringing. While measures would most likely be phased in over time, the scale of the US tariff hikes proposed on the campaign trail — a hefty 60 per cent tariff on imports from China and a 10 per cent rate on other trading partners — far exceeds anything seen during his first term in office. The Biden administration's announcement last week of additional, largely symbolic tariffs on imports from China pales even more in comparison.

Such a protectionist trade policy would take its toll. Higher tariffs push up production costs and the prices of final consumer goods. Barriers to trade inevitably weigh on productivity. Growth would falter, not only in the US but also among retaliating trading partners, especially China. The economic fallout would be exacerbated by the accompanying financial market volatility. While the Federal Reserve is expected to begin lowering US policy rates in September, renewed inflation could bring this process to an abrupt halt.

Stock markets would falter, accompanied by a broad-based appreciation of the US dollar and a weakening of sterling and other currencies. Government borrowing costs would rise.

Under plausible assumptions, the global economy could finish the decade about 1 per cent smaller than in the absence of such a dramatic shift in US policy. Little wonder that almost two fifths of businesses view a Trump presidency as one of the top two threats to the global economy over the next two years.

The British economy would not be immune. True, growth here is less vulnerable to the Trump policy excesses than China and the US itself. Tax cuts and public spending increases in the US might even result in a temporary fillip to demand for our exports. Ultimately, however, US trade policy has the potential to curtail the nascent British recovery.

Solving Britain's growth problem is hard, regardless of the outcome of our own general election. It might be about to get even harder.

Jamie Thompson is head of macro scenarios at Oxford Economics

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The LDC Top 50 has celebrated over 300 exceptional individuals since its launch. Bex Burn-Callander meets three of those inspirational leaders

The pace of change within entrepreneur-led organisations is remarkable. Business leaders at this level don't just deliver year-on-year growth, they pivot into new areas and adapt to volatile and challenging market conditions.

Over the past seven years, The LDC Top 50 Most Ambitious Business Leaders programme has been celebrating such talent – and it's clear none of these individuals rest on their laurels. They demonstrate extraordinary drive and dynamism, often taking their companies further than even they believed possible.

Katrina Hutchinson-O'Neill, Diptesh Patel and Dale Parmenter were each featured in The LDC Top 50 in 2022 and, in just two short years, have accomplished great things.

Hutchinson-O'Neill started her recruiter insourcing business, Join Talent, from her sofa in 2019. Since 2022, she has been on a self-described "journey of world domination". Her remote-first agency has expanded into several new countries, most notably India. "The only market we aren't in is China," she adds.

Many of the Fortune 500 clients she works with have radically changed the way they procure recruitment, which has forced Join Talent to adapt too. "One global technology company gave ten providers a small chunk of work to see how they performed, pitting us against one another," says Hutchinson-O'Neill. Join Talent came out on top – and now works with the brand in 35 countries.

The global economy stalled in 2023. As a result, across the mid-market, nine in ten leaders said they scaled back on their expansion plans. Recruitment, says Hutchinson-O'Neill, is the "canary in the mine". Yet Join Talent weathered the storm far better than its competition. "The sector contracted 60 per cent but we shrank by just 28 per cent," she says. "This year, we are back to hockey stick growth."



KATRINA HUTCHINSON-O'NEILL
CEO, Join Talent



DALE PARMENTER
CEO, DRPG

At UBDS, Diptesh Patel's global digital transformation agency, the headcount has almost tripled in two years to 150. He recently completed his first acquisition and has taken steps towards turning UBDS into an incubator for entrepreneurs. "That aligns with my ambition to give back," he says. "The plan for the next few years is to assist small teams and individuals by leveraging the processes and resources within UBDS to help them scale."

The company is on target to reach £35 million in turnover by 2026 and this growth is creating significant social value through its work on public sector projects. Its apprenticeship scheme and initiative for ex-military personnel bring much-needed talent into the industry.

In the two years since Dale Parmenter was featured in The LDC Top 50, his creative agency DRPG has pioneered new applications for AI, achieved B Corp certification and acquired two agencies. "We bought Birmingham-based OWB Creative Communications and acquired a small agency in Raleigh, North Carolina," he says. "Carolina has become a major tech hub and we're using this acquisition to expand our footprint in the US."

Parmenter credits the agency's success on his focus on the three Ps – people, planet and profit – despite years of economic uncertainty. "There's a lot of competition in this industry, so we have invested in the areas that set us apart from rivals across the globe."

These stories show the importance of embracing change. What delivered success yesterday may not be the key to unlocking growth tomorrow. Great leaders are constantly finding new solutions, raising the bar and driving industry evolution in the process.



To nominate yourself or a CEO or founder you know for The LDC Top 50 2024, visit ldc.co.uk/times

Business

How Aldi shook up the supermarket landscape

The German discounter has elbowed its way into the 'big four' chains and plans to expand, writes Isabella Fish

The Aldi shop in Brighton and Hove city centre was heaving on Sunday afternoon, less than an hour before closing time.

Shoppers filled their trolleys and baskets with groceries and other kitchen staples. Shop workers shuffled back and forth from the storage room to refill the almost-empty fresh fruit and vegetable aisles. Students scoured the shelves for booze at bargain prices.

According to several customers in the London Road store, Aldi has become their first-choice supermarket for the weekly shop; not just a "top up" destination. They claimed to like it for its "cheap prices", "fresher produce", "quality fish and meat", "wide variety of goods" and "quick till services".

Aldi's allure is not only felt by the people of East Sussex. The German discounter has rapidly risen to become one of the most popular – and largest – grocers in Britain. This year it was named by YouGov as the nation's favourite supermarket, winning over shoppers with its ultra-low prices, own-brand produce and championing of British meat.

It became the UK's fourth-largest supermarket chain in 2022, booting out Morrisons from a "big four" line-up that had been roughly the same for almost 20 years: Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda and Morrisons. Last April its market share smashed through 10 per cent for the first time as cash-strapped shoppers tightened their purse strings.

Its growing share in the UK is also a reflection of its shop expansion programme. It has more than 1,020 shops in Britain, up from 920 in 2021. Tesco, the UK's largest grocer with 274 per cent market share, has more than 3,500

shops. Sainsbury's, the number two, has more than 2,300.

Aldi's winning formula is simple, according to its bosses. The market (the other, traditional supermarkets) sets its price for products and Aldi aims to undercut that by about 15 per cent. The grocer is forensic about tracking competitors' retail prices and ensuring that it has double-digit full-basket discounts to the more traditional supermarkets.

Aldi is able to keep its prices low with its no-frills approach: it does not offer home delivery, it spends less on advertising compared with its competitors and its overheads are less expensive as it operates smaller shops.

The retailer avoids brand names; the majority of its products are from cheaper, private labels. The few name-brand products it does stock tend to be either discontinued or overstock, which allows it to buy at a reduced price. Aldi sources its meat from regional farms, reducing transport costs.

Its strategy is similar to that of Lidl, which has also been growing in the UK and has a market share of 8 per cent. The difference is that Lidl is understood to have one-year contracts with its supplier base, while Aldi's are typically set for more than two. That keeps its costs low and reduces the risk of suppliers putting their prices up in times of economic uncertainty.

By sucking in shoppers and "sucking the profitability out of the industry" – as Paul Foley, the former Aldi UK chief executive, put it – profit margins of 2 per cent to 3 per cent are the norm across the grocery sector. The two German-owned discounters have forced the "big four" supermarkets, which once operated on margins of about 7 per cent, to take drastic measures.

Tesco and Sainsbury's have introduced loyalty schemes and Aldi price-match promises on hundreds of key products, and have accepted a hit on profits to keep prices down. Both claim that the price gap with Aldi has narrowed significantly, and the discounters' market share dropped by 0.1 percentage points to 10 per cent in

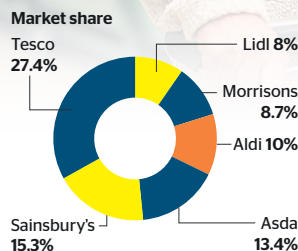
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Business briefing

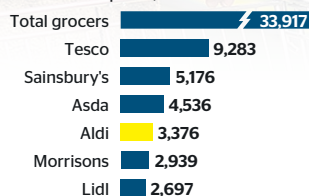
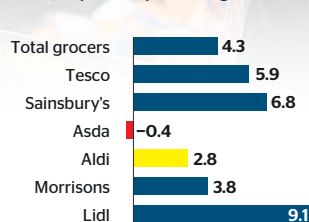
With inflation falling and signs that the economy is slowly picking up after the briefest of recessions, investors are now looking to the Bank of England to play its part by cutting the cost of borrowing to encourage businesses to invest and to ease the burden on consumers' finances.

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Trolley dash

**Consumer spend, £m**

12 weeks to April 14, 2024

**Grocers, year-on-year change, %**

Aldi Nord
5,500 stores

Aldi Süd
7,400 stores

Aldi GB
(part of Aldi Süd)
1,020 stores
£15.5bn sales*
£178.7m operating profit*

*Year to December end of 2022. Source: Kantar

the 12 weeks to April 14, according to Kantar data.

A source on the side of the German discounters suggested that the traditional supermarkets used "complex mechanics which give the illusion of value". Another claimed that rival supermarkets were not "truly price-matching" given that offers were only relevant on core products, such as milk, and not across the full basket.

On the surface the discounters appear to be thriving still. Sales at Aldi topped £15.5 billion in the year to December 2022, up from £13.6 billion in the previous year. Operating profit almost tripled to £178.7 million. However, the fact that neither Aldi nor Lidl reports like-for-like sales or pre-tax profits makes it difficult to decipher the true picture.

Aldi is pushing ahead with plans to open a further 500 shops in the UK, taking its total number of sites to 1,500, even though the expansion has been subjected to delays. It also wants to expand within the M25, where it has about a dozen shops but sees potential for at least 100 more.

Ronny Gottschlich, the former UK

boss of Lidl, said he expected Aldi and Lidl's combined share in the UK to surpass that of market leader Tesco "by 2027 at the latest". However, some analysts have said that their growth is likely to slow down as the other players continue to fight back.

Aldi also has plans for growth outside the UK. An investment of more than \$9 billion by 2028 will see it open 800 more shops in the United States over the next five years. The retailer has been in the US since 1976 but only recently began trying to capture a larger share of the market.

Aldi's operational set-up is unusual in that it operates under two separate companies: Aldi Nord and Aldi Süd. The latter, which includes Aldi UK, has about 5,500 shops. That wasn't always the case. Aldi — short for Albrecht Discount — was first opened in Essen, Germany, by Anna Albrecht in 1913, before being taken over and expanded by her sons Theo and Karl in 1948. The Albrecht brothers decided to split the company in two in 1961 after a dispute over whether to sell cigarettes. Karl believed they would attract shoplifters while Theo did not. Aldi Süd took the

M&S takes fight to Waitrose

Marks & Spencer is upgrading 1,000 of its bestselling food hall products in an attempt to steal shoppers from Waitrose, its middle-class rival.

M&S will improve products that "customers really care about" including sandwiches, cakes and ready meals, its food boss said. Alex Freudmann told the Telegraph that shoppers "expect there to be a difference between M&S and the rest of the market".

M&S holds 3.6 per cent of the market and Waitrose 3.8 per cent, according to the latest figures from NIQ, the market researcher.

shops that were located in the south of Germany, while Aldi Nord took the northern stores. The dividing line is known as the "Aldi-Aquator".

Aldi started to expand internationally in 1967 when Aldi Süd acquired the grocery chain Hofer in Austria. Aldi Nord opened its first shops abroad in the Netherlands in 1973. Shops are

divided into regions, which are operated as limited partnerships that are managed by a regional manager.

The regional manager reports directly to the parent company headquarters — Aldi Nord in Essen or Aldi Süd in Mülheim. In the United States, Aldi Süd operates shops under the Aldi fascia while Aldi Nord chose to keep trading under the Trader Joe's brand after it acquired the California-based retailer in 1976.

Although the two companies operate separately, they work together in some respects and share many of the same marketing and shop design strategies. However, food is sourced on a regional basis. In the UK, Aldi focuses on British produce and goods.

The companies continue to be privately owned and are not traded on any public stock exchange. The Albrecht brothers ran their respective companies as chief executives until they retired in 1993. When they retired control was transferred to private family foundations. The Siepmann Foundation controls Aldi Süd and the Markus, Jakovus and Lukas Foundation controls Aldi Nord and Trader Joe's.

Victorian Plumbing buys 'thorn in side' rival

Jessica Newman

Victorian Plumbing has announced the multimillion-pound acquisition of a smaller, similarly named rival that it went head-to-head with in a court battle eight years ago.

The bathroom retailer has bought AHK Designs, which trades as Victoria Plum, for £22.5 million on a cash-free, debt-free basis. The company said that a cost-cutting programme was under way at Victoria Plum, which fell into administration six months ago before being acquired by AHK, the owner of Beds.co.uk.

Victoria Plum, which was founded in 2001 by brothers Jason and Shane Walker, was put up for sale by Endless, the buyout firm that had owned the company since 2019. Before that, the company was owned by another private equity house, TPG, which was reported to have paid up to £200 million for it in 2014.

Under the ownership of TPG, Victoria Plum's fierce rivalry with Victorian Plumbing came to a head in 2016 when the High Court ruled that both companies had been bidding on each other's brand search terms. The judge ruled that whichever company had benefited more from this practice had to pay the one that lost out. Despite appealing against the decision, Victorian Plumbing was forced to pay its rival £1.75 million.

Doncaster-based Victorian Plumbing expects that Victoria Plum will broadly break even in the second half of this year.

Mark Radcliffe, founder and chief executive at Victorian Plumbing, said that the acquisition "aligns with our ambitions to accelerate our growth" and marked "another exciting strategic milestone for the company and, together with the investment in our distribution centre, provides a unique opportunity to deliver increased shareholder returns".

Radcliffe started Victorian Plumbing from his parents' shed in Merseyside in 2000 after setting up a website for his father, who restored old bathrooms as a hobby. As the company grew, his father built an extra shed to store retail products in the garden. The company, which floated on London's junior market in June 2021, now employs 600 people and sells more than 34,000 products. Last year it delivered a pre-tax profit of £15.6 million on revenues of £285.1 million.

John Stevenson, an analyst at Peel Hunt, believes that the deal marks an opportunity for Victorian Plumbing to "remove a thorn from their side" amid the customer confusion caused by such similar brands, as well as the highly competitive marketing overlap.

With a new Victorian Plumbing warehouse scheduled to be operational from the second half of this year, analysts at Deutsche Numis anticipated that 2024 would be a "transformational year for the group in terms of unlocking capacity in the core bathrooms and expansion categories as well as generating efficiency improvements".

Shares in Victorian Plumbing have dropped by about 70 per cent since its listing as it felt the effects of supply chain disruptions and consumers spending less on big-ticket items such as bathrooms. The announcement yesterday pushed the shares up by 7½p, or 8.9 per cent, to 93p — still some way off the 262p at which they were floated.

Four in ten retailers issued profit warning in past year

Helen Cahill

More than four in ten of Britain's listed retailers have warned over profits in the past year as households cut their spending, according to research that underlines the stress on the consumer sector.

The continued strain on disposable income caused by the cost of living crisis has led to 41 per cent of companies in the FTSE Retailers index issuing at least one profit warning over the past 12 months, according to EY-Parthenon, the consultancy.

The sharpest growth in warnings was in the FTSE Personal Goods sector, where companies issued five warnings during the first quarter of this year, the highest number since the pandemic.

This reflects the spread of earnings pressures into luxury goods alongside continuing pressure on clothing, footwear and jewellery, the study found.

Halfords, DFS and JD Sports all told investors that their profits would fall short of expectations in the first quarter, prompting share price declines for all three companies. The retailers said a drop in consumer demand was driving profits lower.

JD Sports' shares fell by 20 per cent when it said in January that profits would be about £125 million lower than previously predicted owing to "more cautious consumer spending". Halfords cut its annual profit forecast in February on the back of weaker demand for bicycles, car products and tyres. DFS said

demand for sofas had weakened "significantly" when it cut its pre-tax profit guidance by £10 million in March.

Meg Wilson, an EY restructuring partner, said there was "intense competition" between retailers for a reduced amount of consumer spending on non-essential items. "Sector stress and insolvency is rising, especially in mid-market retail. But there's also a growing group of retailers that are meeting — and even beating — forecasts," she said.

"While the green shoots of recovery can be seen, retailers cannot afford to ignore the warning signs and rely on economic resurgence, particularly as we continue to navigate through an unprecedented period of uncertainty with forthcoming global elections and geo-

political risks still high on the agenda."

A number of high street retailers collapsed in the first three months of the year. Ted Baker, the clothing chain, fell into administration in March, with the loss of hundreds of jobs. The Body Shop, the beauty retailer, was also put into administration by its private equity owners in February, leaving about 2,000 jobs at risk.

Fraser's Group put MatchesFashion into administration in March about two months after buying the chain in a £52 million deal from Apax Partners. Fraser's said MatchesFashion had "consistently missed its business plan targets and, notwithstanding support from the group, has continued to make material losses".

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Euro Opps [10]	3991.00	-30.00	Asia on Japan A Acc [10]	7632.29	...	-5.98
Global Focus Sits [10]	22.82	-0.04	Cautious Managed A Acc [10]	8395.55	...	+0.17
Global Focus Sits [10]	6516.00	...	Cautious Managed A Acc [10]	8395.55	...	+0.17
Global Focus Sits [10]	3316.00	-12.00	Diversified Growth A Acc [10]	8132.11	...	+0.09
Global Focus Sits [10]	...	-0.29	Diversified Growth A Acc [10]	8132.11	...	+0.09
Japan Mdr Bal [10]	645.70	-1.70	Diversified Income A Acc [10]	8335.85	...	+0.25
Money Mdr Bal [10]	44.38	-0.06	Diversified Income A Acc [10]	8335.85	...	+0.25
Money Mdr Bal [10]	327.60	-0.10	Diversified Income A Acc [10]	8335.85	...	+0.25
Money Mdr Bal [10]	74.12	-0.21	Diversified Income A Acc [10]	8335.85	...	+0.25
Money Mdr Bal [10]	29.31	-0.07	Diversified Income A Acc [10]	8335.85	...	+0.25

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Gt Hl Yd Bd Inc ‡	40.11	---	---	6.12
Index Linked Bd Inc ‡	112.45	---	-0.36	0.09
Index Trckr Inc ‡	84.25	---	+0.41	3.65
Short Dated Corp Bd Inc ‡	25.33	---	+0.01	4.92

Glob Ins Fund F Acc (%)	659.55	+6.67
Glob Ins Fund F Inc (%)	659.55	+6.67
Glob Ins Fund I Acc (%)	654.53	+6.61
Glob Ins Fund I Inc (%)	654.55	+6.61
Glob Sust Fund Acc (PH) (%)	1845.45	+2.62
Glob Sust Fund F Acc (%)	1845.30	-1.80
Glob Sust Fund F Inc (%)	1843.05	-1.86
Glob Sust Fund I Acc (PH) (%)	1839.40	+2.62
Glob Sustain Fund F Acc (%)	181493.71	-1.84
Sust Corp Bond F F Acc (%)	120.38	-6.11
Sust Corp Bond F F Inc (%)	97.76	-6.00
Sust Corp Bond F I Acc (%)	120743.65	-2.45
Sust Corp Bond F I Inc (%)	138199.06	-1.23
Sust Fixed Inc Orgs F F Acc (%)	4985.66	-6.32
Sust Fixed Inc Orgs F F Inc (%)	4990.55	-6.30
Sust Fixed Inc Orgs F I Acc (%)	4978.92	-6.34
Sust Fixed Inc Orgs F I Inc (%)	4971.17	-6.31
US Adv F F Acc (PH) (%)	1741.26	+7.01
US Adv F F Acc (PH) (%)	1001.55	+7.85
US Adv F I Acc (%)	1844.65	+7.38
US Adv F I Acc (PH) (%)	1825.40	+8.18

THREADES INVESTMENTS

Client Serv: 0800 0608390

Intermediary Serv: 0800 0608400

Institutional Shares (Class 2) (500000 GBP)

Threadneedle UK Eq Opac Inc Int (%)	1.66
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Retail Shares (Class 1)

Threadneedle HY Bd Rct Int (%)	0.02
Threadneedle HY Bd Rct Inc (%)	-0.09
Threadneedle StndrdRct Int (%)	-0.09
Threadneedle StndrdRct Inc (%)	3.08
Threadneedle Strt Bd Rct Int (%)	-0.11
Threadneedle Strt Bd Rct Inc (%)	-0.03
Threadneedle US Eq Rct Int (%)	3.98
Threadneedle US Growth & Inln Rct Int (%)	-0.24
Threadneedle US Inst Rct Int (%)	-0.06
Threadneedle US Inst Rct Inc (%)	1.74

	1977/80	1873/48	+4.40	—
European Inc.	1777.00	1873.48	+4.40	—
Far Eastern Inc.	584.69	617.09	+2.71	—
Int'l Growth Inc.	380.56	400.59	+0.02	0.75
Japanese Inc.	41.85	418.45	+0.43	—
Mutual European	2762.93	2908.59	+21.63	—
Mutual Far Eastern	941.41	932.57	-8.84	1.24
Mutual North Am.	1928.00	2092.88	+6.23	0.24
Mutual UK Inc.	1421.40	1428.80	+0.38	2.50
North American	1219.65	1278.87	+10.25	2.50
Worldwide	100.00	100.00	—	1.56

SCOTTISH WIDOWS UNIT TRUST MGRS			
0845 300 2244			
Authorised Inv Funds (OEICs)			
OEIC A class			
Managed Investment Funds			
Bal Port A Acc 10@	237.60	+0.80	
Bal Port A Acc 10@	207.10	+0.30	
Bal Port A Inc 10@	152.00	+0.30	
Opport Port A Acc 10@	290.20	+0.30	
Prong Port A Acc 10@	266.60	+1.10	

Overseas Growth Investment Funds				
96.17	81.61	71.08	89.97	1.16
84.12	88.26	79.44	76.14	1.11
91.83	74.58	71.50	82.46	1.21
85.27	72.97	71.52	75.66	1.24
114.88	89.61	71.15	95.06	1.26
80.26	87.23	71.55	74.10	1.26
77.61	80.17	71.58	68.93	1.40
87.64	65.01	71.62	74.17	1.26
80.58	56.59	71.65	65.26	1.72
81.23	71.65	71.65	71.65	1.73

Tracker and Specialist Investment Funds				
UK Trkr A Acc @	445.30	...	-1.50	2.71
UK Trkr A Inc @	214.00	...	-1.50	2.77

[illegible]

OEIC B Class				
Tracker and Specialist Investment Funds				
UK Trkr B Acc 10p	492.20	---	+1.20	2.80
UK Trkr B Inc 10p	212.70	---	+0.50	2.88
UK and Income Investment Funds				
Corp Bond B Acc 10p	370.70	---	+0.30	1.39
Corp Bond B Inc 10p	136.30	---	+0.30	1.40
UK Gwth B Acc 10p	205.60	---	+0.30	---
UK Gwth B Inc 10p	798.10	---	---	---

OEIC C Class				Mediums (5-15 years)						
OEIC Income Investment Funds				101.63	95.72	74.41	27.99	0.09	4.36	
UK Gth C Inc acc	144.40	...	(-0.30)	3.21	117.12	104.56	76.65	28.08	17.55	4.00
UK Std Gwth C Acc acc	2598.00	...			87.25	85.12	61.00	29.99	15.45	4.00
					91.67	85.12	61.00	26.66	14.30	4.30
					100.82	100.25	74.41	28.30	15.45	4.00
					79.41	70.10	70.33	31.66	22.40	4.00
					79.41	70.10	70.33	29.56	22.40	4.00
					100.82	100.25	74.41	28.30	15.45	4.00
					96.51	92.72	74.41	27.99	0.09	4.36
					100.82	100.25	74.41	28.30	15.45	4.00
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					96.51	92.72	74.41	27.99	0.09	4.36
					100.82	100.25	74.41	28.30	15.45	4.00
					96.51	92.72	74.41	27.99	0.09	4.36
					100.82	100.				

Higher Inc Acc	159.30	...	+0.10
Higher Inc Acc	46.56	...	+0.01
Japan Gth Acc	127.40	...	...
Managed Acc	40.20	...	+0.10 1.72
Select Inc Inc	91.56	...	2.21
Select Inc Inc	51.21	...	-0.26 2.21
UK Gth Acc	372.70	...	+1.70
UK Eln Alpha	230.00	...	+1.00

UK Ext Mkt Inc %	65.1	...	+0.30
UK Extl Acc %	231.30	...	+2.06 2.75
UK Opas Acc %	234.20	...	...
UK Smlr Cos Acc %	211.70	...	...
UK Smlr Cos Acc %	829.50	...	+7.20 1.52

This is a paid for information service. For further details on a particular fund, readers should contact their fund manager.

MORNINGSTAR Data as shown is for information purposes only. No offer is made by Morningstar or this publication

For ISIS Asset Mgmt see F&C Fd Mgmt Ltd (OEICs)			
JANUS HENDERSON INVESTORS			
Investors Serv: 0800 832 832 DInq: 0845 946 4646			
All Stks Credit A Inc @	115.20	...	-0.20 3.47
Asian Div Inc F Trst Inc @	1081.10	...	-0.09 4.76
Cautious Man Fd A Inc @	308.00	...	+0.70 3.59
Cautious Man Fd A Inc @	144.50	...	+0.30 3.68
China Op Fund A Inc @	1067.00	...	...
China Op Fund A Inc @	1067.00	...	...
Emer Mkts Op Fund A Inc @	2211.20	...	+0.20 0.04
Emer Mkts Op Fund A Inc @	2211.20	...	+1.30 0.66

Sterling Class A Investment Funds 1			
Euro SmIr Cos Acc :	525.29	...	-3.39 ...
Euro SmIr Cos Inc :	462.50	...	-3.00 0.69
Sterling Class A Investment Funds 2			
Extra Income Inc :	716.73	...	+2.55 5.53
Glt & Fd Int Inc :	72.96	...	-0.16 4.32
Glt & Fd Yd Inc :	72.96	...	...
Index United Fd Inc :	113.35	...	-0.26 0.09
Index Trcker Inc :	84.25	...	+0.41 3.65
Short Dated Corp Bd Inc :	25.33	...	-0.01 0.92

CRYSTAL

EXCEPTIONAL AT SEA

MEDITERRANEAN MAJESTY

28TH OCTOBER 2024

8 NIGHTS FROM

£3,895PP FLY-CRUISE

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Investment	Yield	Value	Yield	Value
Ernst Sel Opps Fd A Acc (@2754.00)	...	+11.00	0.75	
Fint Intl Monthly Fd Acc (@299.53)	...	-0.04	4.25	
Global Equity Fund Acc (@5307.00)	...	+6.00		
Global Equity Income A Acc (@7272.46)	...	+0.10	3.05	
Global Tech A Acc (@ 4412.00)	...	-23.00		
Instit UK Hk Opps A Acc (@315.67)	...	+0.64	2.89	
M-Asset Abs Ret A Acc (@912.28)	...	-0.30	1.57	
M-Man Active Fd A Acc (@2384.50)	...	-0.60	1.13	
M-Man Inc Grth A Inc (@ 151.80)	...	-0.10	3.62	
M-Man Inc Grth Fd A Acc (@202.40)	...	-0.20	3.49	
Meridian Bond U Trust Acc (@214.00)	...	+0.40	3.14	
Meridian Bond U Trust Inc (@56.27)	...	-0.10	3.20	
Strategic Bond A Acc (@912.28)	...	-0.29	3.43	
UK Abs Ret Fd A Acc (@ 182.70)	...	+0.40	1.66	
UK Alpha Fund A Acc (@ 160.80)	...	+1.80	1.47	
UK Irish Sm Co Fd A Acc (@742.50)	...	+1.70		
UK Property A Acc (@ 264.95)	...	278.15	+0.01	2.63
UK Property A Inc (@ 147.97)	...	111.07	2.68	
	...	-10.00		

Investment	Yield	Value	Yield	Value
UK Select A Inc @	3013.09	...	+21.28	2.59

Sterling Class A Investment Funds 3

Corp Bd A Inc @	26.15	...	-0.04	4.70
Dividend Inc A	54.72	...	+0.29	4.13
Recovery A Inc @	113.70	...	+0.67	3.57
Sml Cos Inc @	368.64	...	+3.31	2.92

Sterling Class A Investment Funds 4

Episode Allocation A Inc (@147.21)	...	+0.06	3.63	
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MARKS & SPENCER UNIT TRUST LTD
0800 055 5555

	High Income Acc	262,10	262,10	-0,70	3,61
	UK 100 Comp Acc @	525,00	525,00	-1,20	0,99
	UK 100 Cos @	249,70	249,70	-0,50	3,03
	UK Select Pfls @	377,80	377,80	...	2,87
	UK Selection Port Acc @	807,00	807,00	...	3,18
	Worldwide Mgd Acc @	1050,00	1050,00	-4,00	...
	Wwld Mgd @	603,30	603,30	-2,30	...

JUPITER UT MGRS LTD				MORGAN STANLEY INVESTMENT MGMT LTD			
2020 7581 3020				The Morgan Stanley Funds (UK)			
				Class A Shares			
				Equity			
Absolute Return @	31.60	...	...	Dev Opp Fund F Acc @	889.79	...	-0.46
Distributions and Growth @	104.94	...	...	Dev Opp Fund F Acc @	883.03	...	-0.44
		...	-0.24 2.65	Global Bal Inc F F Acc @	1043.02	...	+0.53 1.66
Emy Euro Supts @	145.34	...	-31.23	Global Bal Inc F F Inc @	930.40	...	-0.48 1.70
Euro Special Sits @	504.80	...	+0.62	Global Bal F F Acc @	1047.45	...	+0.42 1.63
European @	337.60	...	-7.68	Global Bal F F Inc @	935.42	...	-0.47 1.94
Financial @	250.81	...	+2.06	Global Bal Sust F F Acc @	1010.24	...	-0.18 1.94
Income Trust @	555.76	...	-2.27 4.39	Global Bal Sust F F Inc @	962.61	...	-0.19 1.97

SANTANDER UNIT TST MGRS				
08457 413002				
Bal Pfolio Inc i@	110,50	...	+0,40	2,41
Bal Port Gwth Acc i@	255,00	...	-0,70	
Equity Inc Inc i@	124,00	...	+1,60	4,49
NAP UK Gwth Inc i@	182,50	...	+1,60	
STUNT 100 Tr i@	301,00	...	+1,10	1,64
UK Gwth Acc i@	553,40	...	+1,50	2,93
UK Gwth Inc i@	282,10	...	-0,70	3,00

For Resolution see Ignis				
TU FUND MANAGERS LIMITED				
British	1035,00	1035,00	+2,00	0,93
European	210,70	219,40	+1,00	

	1977/80	1873/48	+4.40	—
European Inc.	1777.00	1873.48	+4.40	—
Far Eastern Inc.	584.69	617.09	+2.71	—
Int'l Growth Inc.	380.56	400.59	+0.02	0.75
Japanese Inc.	41.85	418.45	+0.43	—
Mutual European	2762.93	2908.59	+21.63	—
Mutual Far Eastern	941.41	932.57	-8.84	1.24
Mutual North Am.	1928.00	2092.88	+6.23	0.24
Mutual UK Inc.	1421.40	1428.80	+0.38	2.50
North American	1219.65	1278.87	+10.25	2.50
Worldwide	100.00	100.00	—	1.56

SCOTTISH WIDOWS UNIT TRUST MGRS			
0845 300 2244			
Authorised Inv Funds (OEICs)			
OEIC A class			
Managed Investment Funds			
Bal Port A Acc 10@	237.60	+0.80	
Bal Port A Acc 10@	207.10	+0.30	
Bal Port A Inc 10@	152.00	+0.30	
Opport Port A Acc 10@	290.20	+0.30	
Prong Port A Acc 10@	266.60	+1.10	

Overseas Growth Investment Funds				
96.17	81.61	71.08	89.97	1.16
84.12	88.26	79.44	76.14	1.11
91.83	74.58	71.50	82.46	1.21
85.27	72.97	71.52	75.66	1.24
114.88	89.61	71.15	95.06	1.26
80.26	87.23	71.55	74.03	1.29
77.61	80.17	71.75	68.93	1.40
87.64	65.01	71.62	74.17	1.26
80.58	56.59	71.65	65.26	1.72
81.23	61.11	71.65	65.26	1.73

Tracker and Specialist Investment Funds				
UK Trkr A Inc ©	445.30	...	-1.50	2.71
UK Trkr A Inc ©	214.00	...	-1.50	2.77

[illegible]

OEIC B Class				
Tracker and Specialist Investment Funds				
UK Trkr B Acc 10p	492.20	---	+1.20	2.80
UK Trkr B Inc 10p	212.70	---	+0.50	2.88
UK and Income Investment Funds				
Corp Bond B Acc 10p	370.70	---	+0.30	1.39
Corp Bond B Inc 10p	136.30	---	+0.30	1.40
UK Gwth B Acc 10p	205.60	---	+0.30	---
UK Gwth B Inc 10p	798.10	---	---	---

OEIC C Class				Mediums (5-15 years)						
OEIC Income Investment Funds				101.63	95.72	74.41	103.27	99.40	-0.09	4.36
UK Gth C Inc acc	144.40	...	(-0.30)	3.21	117.12	104.56	76.65	108.08	-1.77	5.55
UK Std Gwth C Acc acc	2598.00	...			87.25	85.12	61.00	89.29	-0.08	1.35
					91.67	85.12	61.00	86.26	91.07	-0.07
					100.82	100.25	74.41	103.27	99.40	-0.09
					79.41	10.70	0.03	31.31	26.67	-0.22
					90.29	72.57	61.00	79.56	86.26	-0.07
					100.82	100.25	74.41	103.27	99.40	-0.09
					96.51	96.51	74.41	103.27	99.40	-0.09
					100.82	100.25	74.41	103.27	99.40	-0.09
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					100.82	100.25	74.41	103.27	99.40	-0.09
					96.51	96.51	74.41	103.27	99.40	

Higher Inc Acc	159.30	...	+0.10
Higher Inc Acc	46.56	...	+0.01
Japan Gth Acc	127.40	...	...
Managed Acc	40.20	...	+0.10 1.72
Select Inc Inc	91.56	...	2.21
Select Inc Inc	51.21	...	-0.26 2.21
UK Gth Acc	372.70	...	+1.70
UK Eln Alpha	230.00	...	+1.00

UK Ext Mkt Inc %	65.1	...	+0.30
UK Extl Acc %	231.30	...	+2.06 2.75
UK Opas Acc %	234.20	...	...
UK Smlr Cos Acc %	211.70	...	...
UK Smlr Cos Acc %	829.50	...	+7.20 1.52

This is a paid for information service. For further details on a particular fund, readers should contact their fund manager.

MORNINGSTAR Data as shown is for information purposes only. No offer is made by Morningstar or this publication

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %		Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Emerging Mkts Equity A Acc @1368.51	...	...	+0.24	1.24	Merlin Real (Acc) @	255.01	...	-0.37	2.52
Emer Mkts Local Curr Debt A Acc @1913.03	...	...	-0.17	4.44	Merlin Gwth (Acc) @	617.24	...	-1.22	0.32
Emer Mkts Local Curr Debt A Acc @1969.58	...	...	-0.06	6.29	Merlin Inc (Acc) @	360.30	...	-0.40	3.15
Emer Mkts Local Curr Debt Gross A Acc @2020.49	...	...	-0.05	...	Merlin Wrlde (Inc) @	439.26	...	-1.18	...
Enhanced Natural Resources A Acc @1342.24	...	...	-1.25	...	UK Growth @	274.46	...	-0.22	0.77
Global Bond A Acc @	139.30	...	+4.03	0.82	UK Special Sts (Inc) @	229.86	...	-0.72	2.48
Global Bond A Inc @	109.33	...	+3.00	0.82					
Global Bond I Gross Inc @1167.00	...	...	+28.78	...					
Global Dynamic A Acc @	139.61	...	-1.95	...					
Global Energy A Acc @	170.97	...	-1.14	...					
Global Equity A Acc @	272.11	...	-0.33	...					
Global Franchise A Acc @1945.57	...	...	-0.41	...					
Global Free Enterprise A Acc @1950.28	...	...	-1.95	...					
Global Gold A Acc @	219.58	...	+7.97	0.20					
Global Special Situations A Acc @1972.34	...	...	-0.27	...					
Global Special Situations A Acc @1973.84	...	...	-0.27	...					
Managed Growth A Acc @2383.04	...	...	-0.26	1.16					
Monthly High Income A Acc @243.46	...	...	+0.43	3.54					
Monthly High Income A Acc @1972.31	...	...	+0.01	5.01					
Multi-Asset Protector A Acc @182.87	...	...	-0.02	0.90					
Strategic Bond A Acc @	244.54	...	-0.19	1.96					
Strategic Bond A Inc @	119.47	...	+0.09	3.32					
Target Return A Acc @	102.03	...	+0.44	0.82					
Target Return A Inc @	87.63	...	+0.01	0.87					
UK Alpha A Acc @	2942.11	...	+18.45	1.20					
UK Blue Chip A Acc @	770.11	...	+3.15	...					
UK Smaller Companies A Acc @1925.92	...	...	+73.26	0.52					
UK Smaller Companies A Inc @14570.31	...	...	+65.32	0.53					
UK Special Situations A Acc @11853.94	...	...	+8.27	1.24					
UK Special Situations A Inc @1654.41	...	...	+2.92	1.26					

For ISIS Asset Mgmt see F&C Fd Mgmt Ltd (OEICs)			
JANUS HENDERSON INVESTORS			
Investors Serv: 0800 832 832 DInq: 0845 946 4646			
All Stks Credit A Inc @	115.20	...	-0.20 3.47
Asian Div Inc F Trst Inc @	1081.10	...	-0.09 4.76
Cautious Man Fd A Inc @	308.00	...	+0.70 3.59
Cautious Man Fd A Inc @	144.50	...	+0.30 3.68
China Op Fund A Inc @	1067.00	...	...
China Op Fund A Inc @	1067.00	...	...
Emer Mkts Op Fund A Inc @	2211.20	...	+0.20 0.04
Emerg Mkts Fund A Acc @	357.20	...	+1.30 0.66

Sterling Class A Investment Funds 1			
Euro SmIr Cos Acc @	525.29	...	-3.39 ...
Euro SmIr Cos Inc @	462.50	...	-3.00 0.69
Sterling Class A Investment Funds 2			
Extra Income Inc @	716.73	...	+2.55 5.53
GI & Fd Int Inc @	72.96	...	-0.16 4.32
GIH Yd Bd Inc @	22.91	...	6.12
Index United Bd Inc @	11.33	...	-0.26 0.09
Index Trcker Inc @	84.25	...	+0.41 3.65
Short Dated Corp Bd Inc @	25.33	...	-0.01 0.92

CRYSTAL

EXCEPTIONAL AT SEA

MEDITERRANEAN MAJESTY

28TH OCTOBER 2024

8 NIGHTS FROM

£3,895PP FLY-CRUISE

BARCELONA TO ROME

ENJOY EXCLUSIVE SAVINGS

ON 2024 EUROPEAN SAILINGS



FOR MORE INFORMATION

CONTACT MUNDY

CRUISING, CRYSTAL'S NO.1

UK PARTNER SINCE 1991.

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Investment	Yield	Value	Yield	Value
Ernst Sel Opps Fd A Acc (@2754.00)	...	+11.00	0.75	
Fint Intl Monthly Fd Acc (@299.53)	...	-0.04	4.25	
Global Equity Fund Acc (@5307.00)	...	+6.00		
Global Equity Income A Acc (@7272.46)	...	+0.10	3.05	
Global Tech A Acc (@ 4412.00)	...	-23.00		
Instit UK Hk Opps A Acc (@315.67)	...	+0.64	2.89	
M-Asset Abs Ret A Acc (@912.28)	...	-0.30	1.57	
M-Man Active Fd A Acc (@2384.50)	...	-0.60	1.13	
M-Man Inc Grth A Inc (@ 151.80)	...	-0.10	3.62	
M-Man Inc Grth Fd A Acc (@202.40)	...	-0.20	3.49	
Meridian Bond U Trust Acc (@214.00)	...	+0.40	3.14	
Meridian Bond U Trust Inc (@56.27)	...	-0.10	3.20	
Strategic Bond A Acc (@912.28)	...	-0.29	3.43	
UK Abs Ret Fd A Acc (@ 182.70)	...	+0.40	1.66	
UK Alpha Fund A Acc (@ 160.80)	...	+1.80	1.47	
UK Irish Sm Co Fd A Acc (@742.50)	...	+1.70		
UK Property A Acc (@ 264.95)	...	278.15	+0.01	2.63
UK Property A Inc (@ 115.80)	...	111.07	2.68	
UK Property A Inc (@ 147.97)	...	-10.00		
UK Select A Inc @	3013.09	+21.28	2.59	

Investment	Yield	Value	Yield	Value
Corp Bd A Inc @	26.15	-0.04	4.70	
Dividend Inc A	54.72	+0.29	4.13	
Recovery A Inc @	114.70	+0.67	3.57	
Sml Cos Inc @	368.64	+3.31	2.92	

Investment	Yield	Value	Yield	Value
Episodic Allocation A Inc (@147.21)	...	+0.06	3.63	

Investment	Yield	Value	Yield	Value
MARKS & SPENCER UNIT TRUST LTD				
0800 055 5555				

	High Income Acc	262,10	262,10	-0,70	3,61
	UK 100 Comp Acc @	525,00	525,00	-1,20	0,99
	UK 100 Cos @	249,70	249,70	-0,50	3,03
	UK Select Pfls @	377,80	377,80	...	2,87
	UK Selection Port Acc @	807,00	807,00	...	3,18
	Worldwide Mgd Acc @	1050,00	1050,00	-4,00	...
	Wwld Mgd @	603,30	603,30	-2,30	...

JUPITER UT MGRS LTD				MORGAN STANLEY INVESTMENT MGMT LTD			
2020 7581 3020				The Morgan Stanley Funds (UK)			
				Class A Shares			
				Equity			
Absolute Return @	31.60	...	...	Dev Opp Fund F Acc @	889.79	...	+0.46
Distributions and Growth @	104.94	...	...	Dev Opp Fund F Acc @	883.03	...	+0.44
		...	+0.24	2.65	Global Bal Inc F F Acc @	1043.02	...
Emy Euro Supts @	145.34	...	-31.23	...	Global Bal Inc F F Inc @	930.40	...
Euro Special Sits @	504.80	...	+0.62	...	Global Bal F F Acc @	1047.35	...
European @	3379.40	...	+7.68	...	Global Bal F F Inc @	935.42	...
Financial @	250.81	...	+2.06	...	Global Bal Sust F F Acc @	1010.24	...
Income Trust @	555.76	...	-2.27	4.39	Global Bal Sust F F Inc @	962.61	...

SANTANDER UNIT TST MGRS				
08457 413002				
Bal Pfolio Inc i@	110,50	...	+0,40	2,41
Bal Port Gwth Acc i@	255,00	...	-0,70	
Equity Inc Inc i@	224,00	...	+1,60	4,49
NAP UK Gwth Inc i@	182,80	...	+1,60	
STUNT 100 Tr i@	301,00	...	+1,10	1,64
UK Gwth Acc i@	553,40	...	+1,50	2,93
UK Gwth Inc i@	282,10	...	-0,70	3,00

For Resolution see Ignis				
TU FUND MANAGERS LIMITED				
British	1035,00	1035,00	+2,00	0,93
European	210,70	219,40	+1,00	

	1977/80	1873/48	+4.40	—
European Inc.	1777.00	1873.48	+4.40	—
Far Eastern Inc.	584.69	617.09	+2.71	—
Int'l Growth Inc.	380.56	400.59	+0.02	0.75
Japanese Inc.	41.85	418.45	+0.43	—
Mutual European	2762.93	2908.59	+21.63	—
Mutual Far Eastern	941.41	932.57	-8.84	1.24
Mutual North Am.	1928.00	2092.88	+6.23	0.24
Mutual UK Inc.	1421.40	1428.80	+0.38	2.50
North American	1219.65	1278.87	+10.25	2.50
Worldwide	100.00	100.00	—	1.56

SCOTTISH WIDOWS UNIT TRUST MGRS			
0845 300 2244			
Authorised Inv Funds (OEICs)			
OEIC A class			
Managed Investment Funds			
Bal Port A Acc 1@	237.60	+0.80	
Bal Port A Acc 1@	207.10	+0.30	
Bal Port A Inc 1@	152.00	+0.30	
Opport Port A Acc 1@	290.20	+0.30	
Prong Port A Acc 1@	266.60	+1.10	

Overseas Growth Investment Funds					
96.17	81.61	71.08	89.97	116.025	2.4
84.12	88.26	79.48	76.14	111	2.7
91.83	74.58	71.50	82.46	124	3.0
85.27	72.57	71.02	75.66	124	3.0
114.88	83.61	71.12	99.08	126.129	2.6
80.26	72.23	71.02	74.03	126	2.6
77.61	67.17	71.58	68.93	140	2.5
87.64	65.01	71.62	74.17	126	2.6
80.58	56.29	71.02	65.26	172	1.1

Tracker and Specialist Investment Funds					
UK Trkr A Inc ©	445.30	...	-1.50	2.71	
UK Trkr A Inc ©	214.00	...	-0.50	2.77	

[illegible]

OEIC B Class				
Tracker and Specialist Investment Funds				
UK Trkr B Acc 10p	492.20	---	+1.20	2.80
UK Trkr B Inc 10p	212.70	---	+0.50	2.88
UK and Income Investment Funds				
Corp Bond B Acc 10p	370.70	---	+0.30	1.39
Corp Bond B Inc 10p	136.30	---	+0.30	1.40
UK Gwth B Acc 10p	205.60	---	+0.30	---
UK Gwth B Inc 10p	798.10	---	---	---

OEIC C Class				Mediums (5-15 years)						
OEIC Income Investment Funds				101.63	95.72	74.41	103.27	99.40	-0.09	4.36
UK Gth C Inc acc	144.40	...	(-0.30)	3.21	117.12	104.56	76.65	108.08	-1.77	5.55
UK Std Gwth C Acc acc	2598.00	...			87.25	85.12	61.00	89.29	-0.08	1.35
					91.67	85.12	61.00	86.26	91.07	-0.07
					100.82	100.25	74.41	103.27	99.40	-0.09
					79.41	10.70	0.03	31.31	26.67	-0.22
					90.29	72.57	61.00	79.56	86.26	-0.07
					100.82	100.25	74.41	103.27	99.40	-0.09
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Higher Inc Acc (t)	159.30	...	+0.10
Higher Inc Acc (t)	46.56	...	+0.01
Japan Gth Acc (t)	127.40	...	
Managed Acc (t)	404.20	...	+0.10 1.72
Select Inc Inc (t)	91.56	...	2.21
Select Inc Inc (t)	51.21	...	-0.26 2.21
UK Gth Acc (t)	372.70	...	+1.70
UK Etn Alpha (t)	230.00	...	+1.00

Shorts (under 5 years)				
99.40	99.80	T: 2% 24	99.40 + 0.1	4.67
96.99	96.82	T: 2% 25	96.72 - 0.02	4.64
95.21	95.02	T: 3% 25	95.36 - 0.03	4.71
93.51	93.17	T: 0.3% 26	93.21 - 0.04	4.70
91.78	91.47	T: 0.5% 25	91.54 - 0.03	4.69
90.18	89.74	T: 3% 25	90.16 - 0.02	4.49
97.08	92.14	T: 0.5% 25	97.08 - 0.1	4.57

UK Equi Hk Inc 100	65.1	...	+0.30
UK Ethical Acc 100	231.30	...	+2.06 2.75
UK Opas Acc 100	234.20	...	
UK Smlr Cos Acc 100	211.70	...	
UK Smlr Cos Acc 100	829.50	...	+7.20 1.52

This is a paid for information service. For further details on a particular fund, readers should contact their fund manager.

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Enquiries: 0141 222 1151

Balanced A Acc 100	150.74	...	-0.07 1.15
Balanced A Inc 100	131.57	...	-0.06 1.22

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British Land finds exit at Meadowhall by offloading stake

Tom Howard

British Land has sold its share of Sheffield's Meadowhall shopping centre to its joint-venture partner in a deal that underscores the sharp decline in retail property values over the past decade.

Norway's oil fund has paid £360 million for British Land's 50 per cent stake, giving it full control of the 1.5 million sq ft mall and its 300-plus shops, plus bars, restaurants and a cinema.

Including the £14 million sale of some nearby land this year, the sale values Meadowhall at £734 million. That is half what it was estimated to be worth when Norges Bank, which runs the country's oil fund, bought its first 50 per cent stake back in 2012.

It is the latest evidence of the pummeling retail property values have taken in recent years. The growing popularity of online shopping has helped to kill off some of Britain's biggest and most famous retailers including BHS, Debenhams and Topshop, which would have been among the top tenants of shopping centres in years gone by.

Other owners have been hit too. At the end of 2021, Land Securities, a rival FTSE 100 landlord to British Land, bought another 25 per cent share in Bluewater for £172 million, valuing the Kent shopping centre at £688 million

— a 70 per cent cut to what it was thought to be worth when Landsec bought a 30 per cent holding only seven years before.

Jayesh Patel, head of UK retail estate at Norges Bank Investment Management, said: "Despite being out of favour, we remain confident in the prime shopping centre sector, where rents and yields have rebased significantly."

British Land put Meadowhall on the block last year because it does not fit in with the strategy of its chief executive, Simon Carter, who would rather invest in retail parks, London office campuses and inner-city warehouses, where demand from tenants is stronger.

Mike Ashley's Frasers Group was among those to have expressed an interest in Meadowhall; it is understood to have held discussions with British Land and its representatives.

Meadowhall is Britain's fifth-largest shopping mall with about 24 million visitors each year. At the last count, close to 97 per cent of its shops were occupied. It was built on the site of the old Hadfields steelworks by Eddie Healey, the late Yorkshire businessman.

The shopping centre opened in 1990 and at the time it was claimed to have the largest roof and biggest retail car park in Britain. Healey sold out to British Land in 1999 for £1.17 billion in a deal



British Land's stake sale values the shopping centre at half its worth in 2012

reported to have netted him a profit of £420 million.

Although no longer the owner of Meadowhall, British Land has been asked by Norges to manage the mall.

After paying back loans secured against Meadowhall, the landlord expects to receive about £156 million from the sale, some of which it plans to reinvest in retail parks.

Carter, 48, likes retail parks because they are cheaper to run for the tenants,

which can also use their shops in those parks as online collection or returns hubs, an increasingly important part of their businesses. If all else fails, because they are basically metal sheds on the outskirts of towns and cities, they can easily be repurposed into "urban" logistics depots and warehouses.

Mike Prew, a property analyst at Jefefferies, said the disposal "comes as no real surprise". British Land shares closed down 4½p, or 1.1 per cent, at 398½p.

Buzz Bingo bets house on biggest venue

Dominic Walsh

Buzz Bingo is pumping millions of pounds into improving its estate after acquiring the country's biggest bingo club and launching a pared-back bingo hall format for high street locations.

The group, formerly Gala Bingo, has completed the acquisition of the giant Merkur club in Cricklewood, northwest London, together with a second Merkur venue in Northampton.

The terms of the deal, which does not include a third Merkur bingo hall in Lowestoft, Suffolk, have not been disclosed, although sources pointed to a likely figure of £15 million to £20 million for the pair. It is buying the clubs from the Gauselmann gaming family.

Dominic Mansour, 47, chief executive at Buzz Bingo, said the venues had been "at the core of their communities for more than 25 years [with] a focus on a low-stake bingo offer".

Buzz is buying a business that welcomed 410,000 visitors last year and has recorded a 5 per cent increase in admissions in the year to date. On average the two halls pay out winnings of more than £1 million a month. The Cricklewood site holds the Guinness World Record for the biggest single bingo house prize of all time, worth £100,000.

Last year, Buzz lifted retail revenues by 5 per cent, online revenues by 31 per cent and its underlying earnings by 14 per cent.

SPONSORED CONTENT

Up and coming island idyll

Breathtaking coastline, 3,000-year-old culture and a booming wellness industry make Hainan a rising star

International travel has taken a hit in recent years, but it's bouncing back, especially when it comes to lesser known but truly fascinating destinations.

Among the provinces in China seeing a return to form as choice tourist destinations is Hainan, a large island located in the South China Sea, across the Gulf of Tonkin from Vietnam. Thanks to its tropical climate, dense rainforests, pristine beaches, soaring mountains and hot springs, it has earned a reputation as the "Hawaii of the East".

Already popular domestically, Hainan's appeal to foreign travellers has now been boosted by a 30-day visa-free policy for 59 countries, including the UK. From January to April this year, Hainan received a total of 384,000 inbound overnight tourists, a figure expected to exceed 1 million by the end of the year*.

Not content with being China's largest special economic zone, the island is a serious rival to southeast Asia's popular tourist destinations. Hainan is considered particularly safe, with dramatic landscapes and a distinctive ancient Chinese culture supported by advanced infrastructure. In December, a 988km scenic coastal highway opened, with parking bays, viewing points and electric vehicle charging stations; the Hainan ring high speed rail line circumnavigates the island in just three hours.

The most popular area is Sanya on Haitang Bay in the south, which features long sandy beaches and



Overseas visitors can expect

- A modern travel destination built around a rich cultural history
- Stunning scenery, a tropical climate and gorgeous coastline
- Direct flights twice a week via China Southern Airlines from London Heathrow
- Visa-free travel for 30 days
- Duty free shopping – up to \$13,800 on luxury goods
- Convenient payment methods for foreign travellers



"Hainan has strengths that you won't always find in other destinations," says Albert Yip, director general of the Sanya Tourism Board. "Firstly, there is its distinctive Chinese culture. Second, it has first-world amenities and infrastructure. And third, it is very safe."

excellent surf. A sightseeing trip over the bay by helicopter is highly recommended. Sanya is home to a wealth of international hotels and resorts including Atlantis, with over 1,300 luxury rooms, a water park and the largest natural seawater aquarium in China. Shoppers from around the world, including those who travel on cruises from Vietnam and Hong Kong, gravitate to Sanya International Duty Free City, a vast mall with more than 200 stores selling top designer brands.

Broadening its appeal further to overseas travellers is Hainan's burgeoning wellness culture. One standout example is Boao Yiling Life Care Center, located inland from the white sands and palms of the east coast. This health resort offers a

range of treatments and therapies based on traditional Chinese medicine. Meanwhile, the new Lecheng International Medical Tourism Pilot Zone, also known as "Hope City", near Qionghai is positioning itself as a trusted destination for high-end medical tourism, thanks to advanced treatments and new drug therapies.

Hainan's local culture is a unique mix of Chinese, European and southeast Asian influences established on the foundational 3,000-year-old ethnic Li culture. The island has over 100 world class national and provincial cultural heritage projects, including Li brocade weaving, coconut carving and classical Qiong Opera. Seafood features prominently in its cuisine, which is lighter and more mildly seasoned than dishes found on the mainland. In contrast to mainland China's tea obsession, there is a strong coffee culture that champions locally grown beans.

The beautiful Mission Hills Haikou golf complex, with its ten 18-hole championship courses, was crowned Asia Pacific Golf Resort of the Year in 2018, while the hot springs at Baoting and Bawangling National Nature Reserve are a huge draw for sightseers.

As a unique and exotic holiday destination, Hainan is fast becoming a significant name in the travel market.



Find out more at explorehainan.com

*Source: Department of Tourism, Culture, Radio, Television and Sports of Hainan Province

Lauren Almeida Tempus
Buy, sell or hold: today's best share tips

Tech firm is programmed for growth

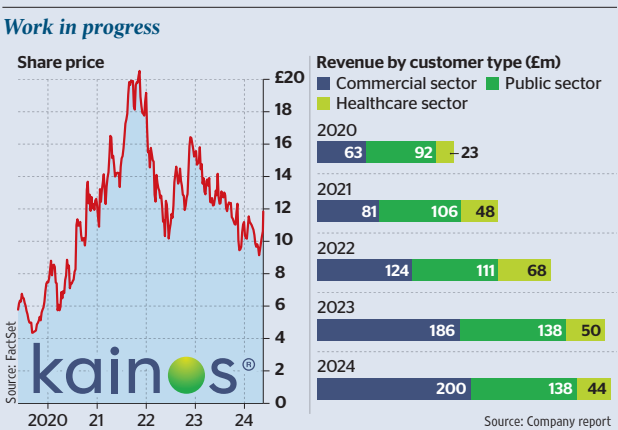
KAINOS
Market cap £1.4bn | Adjusted pre-tax profit £77.2m

There are few British technology companies that have double-digit growth in their sights. Kainos, the FTSE 250 software group, is one of them.

Shares in the company, which designs IT systems for commercial, government and healthcare clients, rose by as much as 13 per cent yesterday — even after reporting that sales in its core digital services business slipped by 5 per cent in the year ended in March. So why are investors betting on this British tech stock?

The company, which is based in Belfast, makes more than half its sales from its digital services division, where it develops custom platforms for customers. The rest of its business comes from a partnership with Workday, the American human resources software platform, which offers ways for clients to digitally manage services from recruitment to payroll. Kainos makes just over a quarter of its top line from selling Workday services.

It is Kainos's Workday products division that looks the most promising, for which Kainos develops and sells its own proprietary software. This software suite, which accounts for 15 per cent of sales, is designed to be used in conjunction with other Workday software. Together this creates a company profile with almost all the



ADVICE Hold
WHY Quality fundamentals and growth prospects already reflected in rich valuation

markers of a quality software business. Kainos's gross margin stands at 49 per cent, which analysts at the broker Berenberg believe could rise to 51 per cent by its 2028 financial year. Meanwhile, an asset-light model means its cash conversion rate stood at an impressive 98 per cent as of the end of March.

For a software business Kainos's subscription-based revenues are relatively low, as they are all derived

from its Workday products — although this is rising steadily, from 11 per cent of sales to 14 per cent in its latest financial year. Further growth looks likely, too: in the past year sales in this division rose by 28 per cent to £573 million, and the company believes it is now on track to deliver £100 million annual recurring revenue by 2026. This looks feasible, given the segment has recorded a five-year compound annual growth rate of 32 per cent.

The low point in the results, however, was the core digital services business, where sales slipped by 5 per cent to £213 million and commercial sales dropped by almost a fifth to £30.8 million as management blamed project deferrals, cost-cutting and some project cancellations.

Meanwhile, revenues from its customers in healthcare dropped by 11 per cent to £44 million as pandemic-related spending dropped off. Stripping out pandemic-related sales, overall this area of the business rose by 23 per cent.

There are also some concerns that the upcoming general election in Britain may affect its business with public sector clients, who account for just over a third of sales and could be unwilling to award new contracts. But after 14 years of working with the UK public sector, the company is well used to maintaining business relationships during uncertain periods. Its reputation as a leader in the sector is evidenced by a net revenue retention rate of 102 per cent. Some investors may hesitate at the macro headwinds that appear to be hitting commercial customers but Kainos is a high-quality company with numerous paths to pursue for growth, not least its expansion overseas: 39 per cent of sales are now generated abroad, compared with 19 per cent five years ago.

Analysts forecast that sales will grow by 11 per cent in its 2025 financial year, followed by a further 11 per cent in 2026 and 15 per cent in 2027 as the business scales abroad, particularly in the United States, and benefits from structural growth in the digital services market. Unfortunately for investors this is no hidden gem: the shares trade at a forward price to earnings multiple of 27. However, the premium looks justified given impressive margins, high cash generation and possible double-digit growth.

MONKS INVESTMENT TRUST
Market cap £2.5bn | Discount to net asset value 9%

There are few investors who can stomach the volatility of a fund that loses 31 per cent of its value one year, and then gains 13 per cent the next. But for the £2.5 billion Monks Investment Trust, it is par for the course.

The trust, which is run by Baillie Gifford, the asset manager, has won back market favour this year after a bruising 18 months. The shares are up 12 per cent in 2024, thanks partly

to a rally in some of its American technology stocks — yet it still trades at an almost double-digit discount to its net asset value. Such a discount, compared with an average of 7 per cent in its sector, suggests an opportunity. The trust owns some of the biggest firms in the world, such as Microsoft, Meta and Amazon.

Some holdings appear atypical for a Baillie Gifford fund. The inclusion of the budget airline Ryanair, for example, in its top ten holdings may seem out of place. However, Monks's managers are not just after technology growth: the trust targets businesses that address a "crisis" in a

way that helps to reduce costs or improves quality of service. Ryanair, which the trust started adding to in 2020, has grown by more than two thirds in the past four years alone.

Investors should note that Monks also owns a stake in its sister trust Schiehallion, which backs private companies. This accounted for 2.6 per cent of Monks's portfolio as of the end of April, though it noted last year it had less than 4 per cent underlying exposure to private firms.

An ongoing charge of 0.43 per cent is reasonable, slightly below the 0.48 per cent sector average.

Monks has been languishing at a

discount since 2021, even after spending £300 million on buybacks last year. The trust has managed to rack up an impressive long-term track record, rising by more than 200 per cent. But until interest rates begin to fall and appetite for its growth strategy beyond technology begins to revive, the shares may be stuck at a discount for a while longer.

ADVICE Hold
WHY Different approach to growth but stubborn discount

NEWS IN BRIEF

UK gets chips agency

An independent agency to oversee national strategy on expanding the UK's semiconductor industry is to be created, as powerful chips become recognised as an area of global strategic significance. The UK Semiconductor Institute will bring together the government, university researchers and the private sector to oversee growth in the computer chip sector, the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology said, and will ensure that researchers have the tools and infrastructure needed to carry out their work.

Morrisons debt plan

Morrisons plans to buy back up to £1 billion of bonds and loans as part of a debt-reduction plan. The UK's fifth-biggest supermarket chain is inviting holders of its term loans to sell back the grocer's debts. The tender offers are expected to settle on June 6. Morrisons has struggled amid strong competition and the cost of servicing debts of £5.4 billion since its £7 billion takeover by Clayton, Dubilier & Rice, the US private equity giant, in 2021.

Stripe to expand in UK

Stripe is to double its London office space and grow its UK team. Founded by Irish brothers Patrick and John Collison, the payment processing giant would not put a figure on how much it was spending on its footprint in Britain, its second-largest market, but 30 new roles are already advertised online. Stripe, which was recently valued at \$65 billion, launched in the UK in 2013 and opened an office in Shoreditch in 2014. The new site will be on Bishopsgate in the City.

WH Ireland sale talks

Financial adviser WH Ireland has confirmed it is in talks about the sale of its capital markets unit to investment bank Zeus Capital. Amid press speculation, it said discussions with Zeus were at "an advanced stage", but that a deal was not certain. The capital markets division makes up about 40 per cent of WH Ireland's revenues. In the six months to the end of September last year, the unit reported revenues of £4.4 million, against group revenues of £10.7 million.

PRICES

Major indices

New York	
Dow Jones	39,806.77 (+196.82)
Nasdaq Composite	16,794.88 (+108.91)
S&P 500	5,308.13 (+4.86)
Tokyo	
Nikkei 225	39069.68 (+282.30)
Hong Kong	
Hang Seng	19636.22 (+82.61)
Amsterdam	
AEX Index	914.95 (+1.70)
Sydney	
AO	8132.10 (+49.80)
Frankfurt	
DAX	18768.96 (+64.54)
Singapore	
Straits	3314.05 (+0.00)
Brussels	
BEL20	4006.94 (+2.14)
Paris	
CAC-40	8195.97 (+28.47)

Zurich	
SMI Index	12037.99 n/a
DJ Euro Stoxx 50	5073.77 (+9.63)
London	
FTSE 100	8424.20 (+3.94)
FTSE 250	20873.33 (+123.43)
FTSE 350	4637.24 (+5.67)
FTSE Eurotop 100	4121.42 (+5.88)
FTSE All-Shares	4590.38 (+6.15)
FTSE Non Financials	5518.69 n/a
techMARK 100	6981.20 (+0.00)
Bargains	n/a
US\$	1.2713 (+0.0008)
Euro	1.1702 (+0.0016)
:SDR	0.98 (+0.00)
Exchange Index	82.88 (+0.19)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
CPI	133.00 Mar (2015 = 100)
RPI	383.00 Mar (Jan 1987 = 100)
RPIX	378.10 Mar (Jan 1987 = 100)
Morningstar Long Commodity	677.16 (+5.72)
Morningstar Long/Short Commod	4703.45 (+27.75)

London Financial Futures

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol	Open Int
Long Gilt	Jun 24	97.880	98.010	97.500	97.580	202026	664294
	SEP 24	98.020	98.020	97.650	97.720	2197	4572
3-Mth Sterling	Jun 24						
	Dec 24						
	Mar 25						
	Jun 25						
3-Mth Euribor	Jun 24	96.265	96.270	96.260	96.265	68367	748043
	Sep 24	96.490	96.500	96.480	96.490	83237	490231
	Dec 24	96.690	96.710	96.680	96.690	93607	525363
	Mar 25	96.880	96.890	96.855	96.865	68004	399363
	Jun 25	97.030	97.050	97.010	97.020	63809	362938
3-Mth Euroswiss	Jun 24						
	Sep 24						
	Dec 24						
	Mar 25						
FTSE100	Jun 24	8464.0	8473.5	8437.5	8446.0	43752	568046
	Sep 24	8482.5	8492.0	8482.5	8484.0	3	217
FTSEurofirst 80	Jun 24						
	Sep 24						

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Commodities

ICIS pricing (London 6,00pm)	
Crude Oils (\$/barrel FOB)	
Brent Physical	81.41 -0.24
BFOE(Jul)	83.46 -0.27
BFOE(Aug)	83.29 -0.12
WTI(Jul)	79.05 -0.15
WTI(Aug)	78.65 -0.16
Products (\$/MT)	
Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)	
Premium Unld	928.00 931.00 +3.00
Gasoil EEC	766.50 767.50 +3.00
3.5 Fuel Oil	460.00 460.00 +10.00
Naphtha	646.00 660.00 +3.00
ICE Futures	
Gas Oil	
Jun	765.00-764.75
Jul	767.00-766.75
Aug	768.50-768.25
Sep	770.25-770.00
Oct	771.75-771.50
Volume:	617712
Brent (6,00pm)	
Jul	83.66-83.65
Aug	83.42-83.40
Sep	83.00-82.99
Volume:	2135240
LIFFE	
Cocoa	
Jul	6036-6038
Sep	6070-6061
Dec	6108-6087
Mar	6400-6387
May	6382-6375
Jul	6276-6229
Volume:	84821
RobustaCoffee	
May	4166-3620
Jul	3510-3506
Sep	3446-3442
Nov	3372-3366
Volume:	15358
White Sugar (FOB)	
Reuters	
May	515.90-515.50
Jul	518.00-516.90
Aug	550.90-550.70
Oct	528.00-527.70
Dec	515.00-514.90
Volume:	74305



Apple cuts phone prices in China

Apple has launched an aggressive discounting campaign in China, offering price cuts of up to 2,300 yuan (£250) on its high-end models. The discounting on Apple's official Tmall site comes as the company faces increasing competition from domestic manufacturers such as Huawei. Running from May 20 to May 28, the maximum discount applies to the ITB

iPhone 15 Pro Max, although other models have also had significant price cuts. A 256GB iPhone 15 Pro Max can be bought for 7,949 yuan (£864), compared with 9,999 yuan when the device was released last September. In the UK, a Sim-free version of the same model costs £1,199 from Apple's online store. The increased competitive pressure on Apple comes after Huawei last month introduced its latest range of high-end smartphones, the Pura 70 series. The latest cuts are steeper than those in a previous Apple discounting

programme in February, which appears to have helped the company mitigate a sales slowdown in China. Apple shipments in China rose by 12 per cent in March, according to Reuters, marking an improvement from the first two months of 2024, when the company experienced a 37 per cent sales fall. Apple's share of the smartphone market fell to 15.7 per cent in the first quarter, from 19.7 per cent a year earlier. That put it almost level with Huawei, whose sales rose by 70 per cent, according to research firm Counterpoint.

The day's biggest movers

Company	Change
Kainos Strong annual results	17.3%
Rolls-Royce Buoyed by rising geopolitical tensions	4.5%
Fresnillo Increase in gold prices	4.0%
Baltic Classifieds Coverage started at "buy"	3.1%
Kingfisher Investors awaiting trading update	1.3%
Wizz Air Ryanair results weigh on shares	-1.0%
NatWest Downgraded to "hold"	-1.3%
Premier Foods Pared back last week's gains	-2.4%
Burberry Extended losses	-3.0%
easyJet Negative sector read-across	-3.2%

The only way is up for Spectris, analysts predict

Emma Taggart Market report

After a rocky period over at Spectris, investors should be taking another look at the precision engineer, according to analysts at HSBC. The bank raised its rating on Spectris from "hold" to "buy" as it now thinks "the worst has passed". The London-listed company has endured a 16.6 per cent decline in its share price since the start of the year. Analysts at the bank are confident that adjustments to Spectris's portfolio, which is now focused on higher growth, along with continued share buybacks will provide investors with a good return. Shares in Spectris gained 104p, or 3.3 per cent, to close at £32.48. The FTSE 100 ended the day largely flat, up just 3.94 points at

Wall Street report

The Nasdaq hit a record, up 108.91 points, or 0.6 per cent, to 16,794.88, as Nvidia shares gained before its earnings this week. The Dow Jones industrial average fell by 196.82 points, or 0.5 per cent, to 39,806.77 after its own record close on Friday.

8,424.20, after making gains during the day following a boost from mining stocks. Gold reached a new high of \$2,442.10 as investors piled into the safe asset amid growing tensions following the death of Iran's president and foreign minister. **Fresnillo**, the Chilean gold miner, climbed 24½p, or 4 per cent, to 639½p; **Weir Group**, the mining equipment company, rose 80p, or 3.8 per cent, to £22.00; and **Glencore**, the mining and commodities trader, advanced 4½p, or 0.9 per cent, to 501½p. The geopolitical uncertainty also buoyed aerospace and defence stocks, with shares in **Rolls-Royce** rising 18½p, or 4.5 per cent, to 436½p, and **BAE Systems** advancing 10½p, or 0.8 per cent, to £13.72. **Babcock**, the FTSE 250 defence company, climbed 10p, or 1.9 per cent, to 538½p, and **QinetiQ** gained 5p, or 1.4 per cent, to close at 373½p. **Kingfisher**, the owner of B&Q, rose 3½p, or 1.3 per cent, to 264p, ahead of a trading statement from the DIY

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Sales help Knights ride high

Knights Group, the legal and professional services business, provided a boost to investors as it revealed a rise in anticipated full-year revenues. Shares in the law firm rose sharply after it announced that sales for the year to the end of April are expected to come in at £150 million, up 6 per cent from last year. The group, which works with businesses including Dunelm, Barclays and easyJet, said underlying profits before taxes are forecast to be at



Dunelm, Barclays and easyJet are among the law firm's clients

least £25 million, up 16 per cent from the £21.6 million reported the previous year. **Knights** floated on Aim in June 2018, raising £103.5 million. It has more than 20 offices across the UK and is primarily

focused on corporate and commercial law outside of London. During the first six months of the financial year **Knights** completed acquisitions in Newcastle and Carlisle that allowed the group to expand its presence in the north of England. Analysts at **Liberum** said that revenues were soft but the group's profits were "supported by cost savings and interest income on client cash". Shares in **Knights** Group rose by 14½p, or 10.2 per cent, to close at 156p.

retailer on Tuesday. Similarly **Greencore**, the FTSE 250 company, advanced 4½p, or 3.3 per cent, to 139½p, as investors awaited interim results from the sandwich maker. Disappointing results from **Ryanair** weighed on other budget airlines; **easyJet** declined 16p, or 3.2 per cent, to 475p, and **Wizz Air**, the FTSE 250-listed Hungarian airline, descended 20p, or 1 per cent, to £20.00. The FTSE 250 rose to 123.43 points, or 0.6 per cent, to 20,873.33, as strong annual results from **Kainos**, the software company, boosted the mid-cap index. The Belfast-based business topped the FTSE 250 leaderboard to end the day up 184p, or 173 per cent, at £12.46. Boardroom buying instilled confidence in **Dunelm Group** as its non-executive director, Ajay Kavan, purchased shares worth £24,990. The homewares retailer ended the day up 55p, or 5.4 per cent, at £10.67. **Carnival**, the cruise operator, received a boost after Norwegian Cruise Lines, its sector peer, raised its

annual profits outlook for the second time in three weeks following strong demand. Shares in **Carnival** sailed ahead 63p, or 5.8 per cent, to £11.41½. On the flip side, analysts at **Shore Capital** Group downgraded **NatWest** from a "buy" to "hold", urging clients to lock in profits: shares in the bank fell 4p, or 1.3 per cent, to 317p. And **Premier Foods** pared back last week's gains to end the day down 4½p, or 2.4 per cent, at 172p. It was the best day of the year so far on London's junior index, as shares on Aim rose 2 per cent after **Keyword Studios** closed at a 12-month high — up 812p, or 55.2 per cent, at £22.82 — following news that it had accepted a takeover bid of £2.2 billion from EQT, the Swedish private equity group. Shares in **CT Automotive** climbed 11p, or 19.6 per cent, to 67p, as the components group, which makes the interiors for Lamborghini and Bentley, reported positive annual results with a pre-tax profit of \$5.9 million.

London Grain Futures					
LIFFE Wheat (close £/t)					
May	186.00	Jul	172.00	Nov	221.00
Jan	unq	Mar	unq	Volume:	958
London Metal Exchange					
(Official)					
Cash	3mth			Dec 22	
Copper Gde A (\$/tonne)					
10856.5-10857.0	10925.0-10930.0		10845.0-10855.0		
Lead (\$/tonne)					
2283.0-2283.5	2336.0-2337.0		2410.0-2415.0		
Zinc Spec Hi Gde (\$/tonne)					
3046.0-3047.0	3086.0-3087.0		3022.0-3027.0		
Alum Hi Gde (\$/tonne)					
2567.5-2568.0	2622.0-2622.5		2738.0-2743.0		
Nickel (\$/tonne)					
21260.0-21270.0	21600.0-21650.0		22555.0-22605.0		
Tin (\$/tonne)					
34550.0-34575.0	34790.0-34800.0		34340.0-34390.0		
					15mth

Gold/Precious metals (US dollars per ounce)				
Because of a technical issue, the gold fix prices are from Friday.				
Bullion: Open \$2420.30				
Close \$2425.55-2425.90 High \$2449.93				
Low \$2409.62				
AM \$2381.75 PM \$2402.60				
Platinum \$ (£)				
Silver \$31.93 (£25.11)				
Palladium \$ (£)				
European money deposits %				
Currency	1mth	3mth	6mth	12mth
Dollar	0.13	0.20	0.29	0.55
Sterling	4.20	5.30	4.74	0.81
Euro	0.10	0.15	0.20	0.50

Money rates %				
Base Rates Clearing Banks 5.25 ECB Refi 4.50 US Fed Fund 5.25-5.50				
Halifax Mortgage Rate (SVR) 8.74				
Sterling spot and forward rates				
Mkt Rates for	Range	Close	1 month	3 month
Copenhagen	8.7074-8.7310	8.7304-8.7317	145ds	398ds
Euro	1.1704-1.1672	1.1703-1.1702	11pr	30pr
Montreal	1.7277-1.7313	1.7311-1.7313	6ds	17ds
New York	1.2690-1.2714	1.2713-1.2714	2pr	8pr
Oslo	13.537-13.594	13.591-13.594	98ds	233ds
Stockholm	13.551-13.607	13.591-13.594	220ds	620ds
Tokyo	197.40-198.45	198.45-198.46	96ds	262ds
Zurich	1.1536-1.1566	1.1565-1.1567	41ds	114ds
Premium = pr Discount = ds				

Dollar rates	
Australia	1.4983-1.4984
Canada	1.3616-1.3618
Denmark	6.8672-6.8682
Euro	0.9205-0.9205
Hong Kong	7.9807-7.9807
Japan	156.09-156.10
Malaysia	4.6823-4.6875
Norway	10.690-10.693
Singapore	1.3470-1.3471
Sweden	10.691-10.694
Switzerland	0.9096-0.9100
Other Sterling	
Argentina peso	1129.9-1129.9
Australia dollar	1.9048-1.9050
Bahrain dinar	0.4757-0.4827
Brazil real	6.4823-6.4861
Euro	1.1702-1.1703
Hong Kong dollar	9.9148-9.9164
India rupee	105.89-105.90
Indonesia rupiah	20332-20350
Kuwait dinar KD	0.3891-0.3914
Malaysia ringgit	5.9522-5.9573
New Zealand dollar	2.0796-2.0801
Singapore dollar	1.7115-1.7135
S Africa rand	23.109-23.120
U A E dirham	4.6660-4.6662

Exchange rates			
	Bid	Change	
Australia \$	1.904	+0.01	
Canada \$	1.729		
Denmark Kr	8.727	+0.02	
Euro	1.170		
Hong Kong \$	9.910		
Hungary	450.941	-0.65	
Indonesia	20301.956	+41.38	
Israel Shk	4.691	-0.01	
Japan Yen	198.349	+0.99	
New Zealand \$	2.079	+0.01	
Norway Kr	13.577	+0.01	
Poland	4.974		
Russia	115.140	-0.42	
S Africa Rd	23.153	+0.09	
Sweden Kr	13.592	-0.01	
Switzerland Fr	1.155		
Turkey Lira	40.924	+0.02	
USA \$	1.271		
Rates supplied by Morningstar			
MORNINGSTAR Data as shown is for information purposes only. No offer is made by Morningstar or this publication			

Business Equity prices

Dividend yields Please note dividend yields are supplied by Morningstar. The yield is the sum of a company's trailing 12-month dividend payments divided by the last day's closing share price.

12-month high and low High/Low prices for UK equities are based on closing prices. Investment trust high and low prices are based on intra-day figures.

12 month High Low Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	Div%	P/E
395% 133% Aston Martin Lag	140%	-	1%	-	-3.8

Automobiles & parts

395% 133% Aston Martin Lag	140%	-	1%	-	-3.8
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Banking & finance

238% 136% Abdn	153	-	9.5	-	-
9% 3% Acuity RM	4%	-	-	-	-0.5
2837 2029 Admiral	2698	+ 29	2.7	24.3	-
24% 10% ADVFN	14%	+ 4	-	-	-3.6
362 249 AJ Bell	362	+ %	2.9	21.9	-
2748% 2209% Aon Corp	23116%	+ 104%	-	-	23.5
1105 877% Arbutnot Bldg	1010	-	4.5	4.5	-
9 4 Argo Group	4%	+ %	1.5	2.0	-
238% 166% Ashmore	200	-	8.4	13.7	-
1571 1195% Aus New Z	1480%	+ 2%	-	-	12.7
496% 369% Aviva	494%	+ 1	6.7	13.3	-
414 260% Banco Santander	412%	+ %	3.6	7.3	-
5420 2650 Bank of Georgia	4205	+ 65	6.4	3.7	-
2121 129% Barclays	216%	-	3.6	8.0	-
% Blue Star Capital	-	-	-	-	-0.2
512% 312 BP Marsh&Ptns	463	-	1.4	12.7	-
15% 4% Brexitech	51%	+ %	1.2	-	-
- Brevin Dolphin	5%	+ 1	-	-	-28.1
289% 166% Bridgepoint	238%	+ 3%	3.7	26.4	-
38 24% Cenkos Secs	29%	-	-	-	5.9
286 249 Chesnaar	249	- 2%	9.5	-	-7.3
- City of Lon Gp	10	+ 1	-	-	-4.6
450 301 City Lon Inv Gp	365	+ 5	9.1	12.6	-
978% 299% Close Bros	506	+ 23%	9.3	5.3	-
274 89% CMC Markets	268	+ 4	1.8	7.4	-
1333% 38% Commerz&K	1333%	+ 11	-	-	9.4
1429% 779% Deutsche Bk	1341	+ 4%	-	-	5.5
225% 133% Direct Line Ins	139%	+ 2%	2.0	12.7	-

Investment companies

12 month High Low Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	Div %	P/E
2992 1837% 3I Group	2977	+ 19	2.8	40.6	-
349 276% 3i Infrastructure	346	+ 1	3.3	-7.9	-
1530 1126 Aberforth Smfr	1522	+ 12	3.2	-32.8	-
1264 977% Alliance	1264	+ 10	1.9	-3.4	-
417% 323 Asia Dragon Tr	414	-	1.5	-36.1	-
210 160 Athelinst Trust	180	-	5.0	-4.5	-
259% 185 Axi Global Trust	244%	-	1.4	-10.2	-
243 175 Baillie Gifford Ch Gr	228	+ 3	0.8	-10.8	-
101% 75% BaillieGifford Eu Gr	100%	+ %	2.3	-34.6	-
802 633 Baillie Gifford Jntr	740	+ 5	1.1	-12.7	-
150% 110% Baillie Gifford SN	112%	+ %	-	-36.3	-
176 141% Baillie Gifford UK Gr	176	+ 2%	1.9	-35.1	-
84% 60 Bal Comm Prop	76%	+ %	4.6	-27.7	-
117% 91% Bankers Inv Trst	114%	-	2.0	-10.8	-
423% 325% BH Macro	352	-	1%	-	-33.5
1048 715 Biotech Growth	975	- 8	-	-	-5.2
127 104 BldckRd Com Inc	125%	+ %	3.4	-10.8	-
159% 131% BldckRd Fro Inv	153	+ 1	3.8	-8.1	-
65% 457% BldckRd Grt Euro	630	-	1.0	-5.6	-
205% 170 BldckRd Inc & Gwth	203	-	3.5	-12.2	-
1500 1146 BldckRd Smfr	1492	+ 12	2.7	-11.7	-
207 172% BldckRd Sustain Amer	204	-	3.5	-10.1	-
631 503 BldckRd Throgmorton	631	+ 8	2.2	-10.3	-
644 490 BldckRd Wld Mnt	631	+ 4	5.9	-6.3	-
1360 1065 Brown Adv US sm	1335	+ 2%	-	-	-11.9
1365% 964 Brunner	1345	-	1.6	-4.9	-
3700 2593% Calcedonia Inv	3490	+ 30	1.2	-35.4	-
429% 371% City of Lon Tr	428	+ 1%	4.9	-2.2	-
91 60 Crystal Amber Fd	79	+ 1	22.6	-31.2	-
516 406 CT Priv Eq Ord	468	+ 7	3.9	-35.8	-
96 72 CT Corp Property	73%	- 1%	4.1	-34.5	-
340 266% CT UK Cap&Inc	338	+ 1%	3.6	-8.5	-
93 75 CT UK HIT B	87%	+ %	-	-	-2.7
95% 71 CT UK HIT	93	-	5.9	-4.9	-
590 448% Dunedin Entp	493	-	5.7	-22.3	-
742% 612% EdinburgH Tr	734	+ 2	3.6	-9.5	-
157% 120% Edin Wvnde	146	+ %	-	-	-11.7
330 273% EP Global Op	309	+ 10	1.3	-21.6	-
95% 73 Eurubean Assets	90	+ %	5.6	-11.7	-
915 740% Europ Op Trust	905	+ 1	0.3	-10.6	-
1058 825% F&C Invest Tr	1046	- 2	1	-	-30.8
549% 473% Fidfly Asian Val	542	-	2.6	-9.6	-
246 181% Fidfly China Sp	243	+ %	2.7	-10.9	-
740% 568 FidflyEngMkt	720%	+ 6	2.0	-11.9	-
412% 113% Fidfly Europe Trst408%	412	+ %	2.0	-4.9	-
187 151 Fidfly Jap Tr	177	+ 1%	-	-	-10.5
311% 252 Fidfly Spec Val	311%	+ 3	2.8	-4.5	-
920 778% Fis Gwth & Inc	847	- 7	2.0	-7.4	-
90 59% GCP Infrastructure	77%	+ %	6.3	-35.8	-
38 22% Gdn Prosp P&C Mnt	36%	+ 1	-	-	-18.7
1405 127% Greencoat UK Wnd	142%	+ 1%	6.3	-16.9	-
230% 161 Hansa Investment	219	-	0.8	-43.2	-
221 160 Hansa Inv Co 'A'	214	- 2	0.8	-45.9	-
2450 2015 Hbrvest GIM Pl Eq	2270	-	-	-	-42.8
195% 149 Hnd Euro Fund	195%	+ 1%	2.1	-11.7	-
177 136 Hnd High Inc	167	+ %	6.0	-4.2	-
670 626 Hnd Smrl	86%	+ 5	2.9	-34.4	-
2220 1590 Hndrld	2185	+ 5	-	-	-12.4
504 348% Hycapital Trust	490	-	1.3	-4.6	-
152% 111 HCL Infra	124%	+ %	5.2	-22.6	-
i - Highbridge Tactical	-	-	-	-	-61.1
1276 1046 ICG Ent Tr	1204	- 4	1.6	-38.7	-
421% 331% Impax Evn Mkts	402	+ 2	1.0	-11.0	-
349 283 Invesco Asia Tr	334	-	4.2	-12.3	-

12 month High Low Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	Div%	P/E
9674 7986 Lond Stk Ex Gp	9328	- 8	1.2	67.5	-
238% 183 M&G	205%	-	9.5	16.5	-
277% 202 Man	256	- %	5.0	16.8	-
26 15 Manx Flt	20	-	2.2	5.7	-
2% 1 Marechale Cap	1%	+ %	-	-	-3.7
798 490 Mattioli Woods	788	-	3.4	41.0	-
- Metal Tiger	9	+ %	-	-	-2.0
125% 28% Metro Bank	36%	+ 1	52.0	-	-
1850% 1325% Nat Aust Bk	1824%	+ 10%	-	-	14.8
326% 176% NatWest	317	- 4	5.3	6.4	-
343 332 Numis	343	-	-	-	-
536% 280% Onesavings Bank	473	+ 9	6.9	7.2	-
576 377% PayPoint	551	+ 18	3.5	12.9	-
- P&F Group	%	+ %	-	-	-0.4
582% 441% Phoenix	512%	- 2%	10.2	-	-
1183 687% Prudential	805%	- 14	2.0	16.5	-
3 % Quantum Blockchain	%	-	-	-	-3.0
114 71% Quilter	111	- 1	4.6	35.8	-
60% 1% Randall & Quilber	1%	-	-	-	-
2005 1458 Rathbone Grp	1782	+ 28	4.9	35.0	-
% Riverfort Global Opps	%	-	1.6	-1.8	-
248 162% Rockwood Strategic	248	+ 4%	6.4	-	-
2570 1800 S & U	2020	+ 5.0	6.6	7.4	-
1% % Sancus Lending Grp	%	-	-	-	-0.1
46% 39% Schroder REIT	44	- %	-	-	-4.0
469 347% Schroders	370%	+ %	5.8	15.3	-
1183 402 St James Place	477%	- 1%	4.9	-	-
784% 573% Stand Chart	784%	+ 3	2.7	9.4	-
12 4% Starves	11%	+ %	-	-	-1.9
60 24% STM Group	57%	-	1.0	59.2	-

12 month High Low Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	Div%	P/E
590 290 Billington Hldgs	582	- 5	2.6	10.3	-
243 170 Boot (Henry)	203	+ 2	3.6	13.9	-
403 304% BREEDON	403	+ 6	3.4	13.0	-
418% 291% Br Land	398%	- 4%	5.7	-3.4	-
160 110 Caledonian Trst	120	- 5	-	-	-
60% 49% Cap & Regnl	51%	- %	10.9	-9.8	-
2450 2300 Cardiff Prop	2300	-	0.9	21.9	-
7% 1% Corecapital	1%	-	-	-	-0.2
163% 118% Clarke Tr	159	+ 1	3.7	11.4	-
- Countryside Partner	229%	+ 14	-	-	16.7
17% 11% Craven House	15%	-	-	-	-0.1
2402 1779 Derwent London	2256	+ 10	3.5	-5.3	-
4% 3% Dolphin Capital	4%	-	-	-	-4.9
28 15% First Prop	18%	+ %	-	-	-
47% 33 Fletcher Kings	47%	-	1.5	21.7	-
69% 34% Foxtons Group	69%	+ %	1.3	40.7	-
273 176 Galliford Try	265	- 3	4.2	19.2	-
461 261% Genus Group	459%	+ 4	2.7	29.8	-
547 20% Glesson (M)	547	+ 6	2.4	18.7	-
1008 751 Grafton	982	+ 1%	3.7	11.3	-
274% 217% Grainger	253	- 5	2.5	72.2	-
514% 356% Great Portland	227%	- %	2.9	-3.2	-
29% 20% Hamnerston	49%	+ %	5.1	-	-
140 95% Harworth Gps	140	+ 2%	1.0	12.1	-
425 275 Hoath (Samuel)	275	-	4.3	8.1	-
286% 185 Helical PLC	237%	+ 3	5.0	-1.6	-
890 587% Highcroft Invs	587%	- 12%	-	-	-2.5
168% 120% Ithodco	158%	+ 1%	4.4	29.8	-
225 188 James Halstead	197	-	4.1	18.4	-
1376 668 Keller	1350	- 8	2.8	11.2	-

12 month High Low Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	Div%	P/E
42 26% SKG	28%	+ %	-	-	-7.5
70% 45 SigmaRac	65%	+ 1%	34.5	-	-
98% 78% Sirius Real Estate	98%	-	5.2	32.6	-
168% 117% Smart (J)	125	-	2.5	-	-
38% 17 Steppe Cement	17%	-	-	-	6.1
149 99% Taylor Wimpey	149	- %	6.4	15.0	-
158 110 Town Centre	158	+ 3	3.2	6.2	-
935% 692% Travis Perkins	845%	- %	2.1	47.5	-
170% 123% Tritax Big Box Reit	163	- 2%	43.8	-	-
69% 44 Tritax Eurobox	58%	+ %	-	-	-
396% 236 Tyman	376	- 4	3.6	19.2	-
1057 847 Unite	94%	-	12.7	3.7	38.3
1307 636 Vistry Group	1307	+ 1	2.4	18.2	-
106% 69% Warehouse REIT	84	+ %	-	-	-3.1
604 454% Workspace Grp	556	- 6	4.7	-4.7	-
730 660 Wynnstay Props	685	-	3.5	15.7	-

Consumer goods

1%	% Agritera	%	—	—	-0.2
36%	22 Alcoa	32%	-	%	1.6 16.3
880	652 Anglo-Eastern	700	+ 14	4.6	7.5
237	168% Animakare	237	+ 8	1.9	—
2731	182% AB Foods	2726	- 4	1.7	20.3
129	81 Bakavor Group	129	+ 2	5.7	14.0
592	451% Barr (AG)	592	+ 14	2.6	19.6
1%	% Bidstack Group	%	—	—	-0.3
36	20% Brand Architects	27%	—	—	-1.3
2738%	2267 Brit Amer Tob	2476	+ 1	9.3	-3.8
1018	785% Britvic	1006	+ 2	3.0	21.0
2520	1067 Burberry	1067	- 33	5.7	8.9
175%	123% C&C Grp	175%	- 1%	2.7	—
5%	1 Capital Metals	5	-	1%	—
149%	93% Carr's Grp	137%	+ %	5.5	—
330	238 Character Grp	319	—	5.9	17.7
1495	1000 Churchill China	1100	—	3.2	14.7
2798	2065 Coca Cola HBC	2798	+ 14	2.3	18.6
810	655 Colefax	810	—	0.6	9.4
4425	3100 Cranwick	4425	+ 20	1.8	18.8
—	— Devro	329	—	—	17.8
3548	2685% Diageo	2794	- 6%	2.9	19.0
%	% Distill	%	—	—	-6.8
874	670 Evans (NLP)	852	+ 16	5.3	11.1
110	89 Finsbury Food	110	+ %	1%	13.1
11700	9125 Games Workshop	9880	- 5	4.2	23.3
1582%	1122% Glanbia	1580%	+ 67%	2.1	14.9
139%	68% Greencore	139%	+ 4%	19.3	—
277	157 Headlam	160%	+ 1%	6.2	16.7
942	623 Hilton Food	942	+ 2	3.3	76.5
38%	14% Hornby	29	—	—	-5.5
1986%	1580 Imperial Brands	1939%	- 26	7.4	7.7
1%	1 J Lewis Hfdr	1%	+ %	—	7.9
8421%	6152% Kerry Gp	6873%	+ 196%	1.4	19.3
123	25% McBride	112	+ 3	1.0	11.0
260	97% Mulberry Group	120	—	0.8	38.0
1200	882 Nichel	1075	+ 15	2.6	21.3
218	135% Norros	218	+ 3	4.7	13.0
330%	235% Origin Ent	252%	- 12%	5.4	7.9
5%	4% Pittard	5%	+ 1	—	—

Equity prices **Business**

12 month	High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
501	499½	MediClinic	501	+	½	—	31.3
1%	¼	N4 Pharma♦	½	—	—	—	-1.9
75½	54	NIOX Group♦	73½	+	½	—	34.9
049½85	93.04	Novartis	CHF93.37	+	0.75	—	25.2
2%	2	Omega Diags♦	2%	—	—	—	-1.6
14	½	Oveco Bio♦	½	—	—	—	-0.3
470	166½	Orford Biomedica	326	+	2½	—	-5.1
2%	½	Physicom♦	1½	—	—	—	-3.1
8½	2½	Proteome Scies♦	3½	-	½	—	16.6
6524	4110	Reckitt Benckiser	4536	-	57	4.1	14.3
44	8½	RUA Life Sciences♦	11½	+	1	—	-1.3
135	10½	Sareum Hldgs♦	30½	-	3½	—	-4.9
1301½	896½	Smith & Neph♦	1023	-	½	2.9	43.3
26½	207	Spire Hcare	250	-	½	0.1	39.0
91%	4½	Synalgen♦	7½	+	½	—	-1.4
71½	49	Tissue Regenix♦	61½	—	—	—	—
21½	4	Totally♦	7½	—	—	—	1.7
485	327½	Tristel♦	440	-	2.9	35.1	—
14½	1½	ValRo♦	4	+	1½	—	-1.5

Industrials

107	50½	Accsys Tech♦	59	+	½	—	-2.6
4712½	3482½	BASF	4210½	+	32½	—	—
4684	2219½	Bayer DM50	2450½	+	7½	—	-9.4
175	70	Biome Tech♦	72½	—	—	—	-0.5
2½	—	Bytrol♦	—	—	—	—	-2.2
—	—	Camb Gbl Timber♦	6½	—	—	—	-9.0
87	64	Coats Grp♦	87	-	1½	2.5	21.6
6372	4076	Croda♦	4726	+	18	2.3	38.6
930	230	Cropper (James)♦	400	-	1.7	11.7	—
148½	97½	Elementis♦	148½	+	1½	1.1	40.2
15½	4½	Hardie♦	6½	—	—	—	-3.5
1909½	1446½	Johnson Math	1835	-	10	4.1	19.0
1706	1290	Mondi	1604	+	12½	3.9	16.2
112½	87½	Robinson♦	112½	—	—	—	4.8
413	263½	DS Smith	376	+	1½	4.8	11.2
711½	495½	Swire Pacific	711½	+	17½	—	3.5
9½	2	Symph Environ♦	2½	—	—	—	-2.1
806½	122½	Synthomer	334	+	3½	—	-2.7
2469½	1995½	Takeda Pharm	2099½	+	17½	—	33.5
3½	½	Velocis♦	½	—	—	—	-0.2
1606	1226	Victrix	1350	+	48	4.5	19.1
507	325	Wynnstay Group♦	382½	—	—	—	45.1
522	276	Zetefoams♦	522	+	8	1.4	31.3

Leisure

130	69	888 Hldgs	85½	-	1	—	-2.2
819	507	Accesso Tech♦	758	+	2	57.8	—
595	520	Best of the Best♦	530	—	—	—	5.9
1377	743½	Carnival	1141½	+	63	45.1	—
137½	116	Celtic♦	137½	—	—	—	18.5
1%	¼	Cineworld♦	½	—	—	—	—
424½	275½	Domino's Pizza	347½	+	7½	3.0	12.4
1486½	734½	Entain	745½	+	23½	2.4	-5.2
17475	1235	Flutter Ent	16310	+	95	—	—
41½	28½	Gaming Realms♦	39½	+	½	24.8	—
290	265	Heavtree♦	265	—	—	2.0	8.5
160	110	Heavtree A♦	160	—	—	3.4	5.1
125	45	Hermes Pacific♦	52½	+	5	—	—
8752	5210	InterContinental Hotels	7900	+	78	1.5	22.8
1½	½	Minion Gap♦	½	—	—	—	-4.6
269½	199	Milch & Butlers	266	+	2½	—	—
178	82½	On The Beach	139½	+	1½	22.0	—
104½	62½	Rank Grp	92	-	2½	—	-4.4
68	36½	Restaurant Gp	64	—	—	—	—
63	42	Rotaab♦	63	—	—	—	—
175	—	Sportech♦	84	+	9	—	—
281½	179½	SSP	208½	+	1½	1.2	—
3	½	Tasty♦	1½	—	—	—	-0.1
130	32½	Tintin♦	32½	-	5	—	-1.7
677	401	Tui	554½	-	4	4.5	—
1%	1	Webs Holdings♦	1½	—	—	—	-6.6
847½	613	Wetherspoon JD	805	-	1½	24.9	—
3678	2996	Whitbread	3131	-	14	2.6	—
1240	946	Young & Co A♦	1045	+	15	2.0	21.8
892	592	Young & Co - N/V♦	652	+	8	13.6	—

Media

107½	54½	Aeorema Comms♦	60	—	—	5.0	20.8
52	27½	Altitude Group♦	41	+	3½	—	56.9
112	63½	Arcontech Grp♦	100	—	—	3.4	11.6
340½	188½	Ascential♦	340½	-	207½	—	—
763½	587	Auto Trader	727½	-	2½	1.2	28.7

12 month	High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
596	381	Bloomsbury Pub	596	+	30	2.4	23.0
6	½	Bonhill Group♦	½	-	½	—	-1.5
157½	65	Catalyst Media♦	70	—	38½	4.7	—
—	—	CD Media♦	½	—	—	—	-0.2
—	—	DCD Media♦	100	-	30	—	5.0
48½	31	Ebliquity♦	44	—	—	—	—
1046	577	Future	1027	+	3	0.3	10.9
243	132	GlobalData♦	228	-	4½	1.0	60.0
120½	120½	Hyve Group	120½	—	—	—	—
205½	107½	IG Design Grp♦	205½	-	4½	—	-9.1
852½	685½	Informa	852	+	5½	1.4	—
79½	55½	ITV♦	77½	-	½	6.3	14.9
5	2½	Jayving♦	2%	—	—	—	-0.1
2½	½	Live Company Grp♦	½	—	—	—	-0.1
172½	119½	ME Group♦	168	+	1½	4.4	12.6
—	—	Mediaset♦	—	—	—	—	-1.8
71	42½	Merit Grp♦	70	—	—	—	-6.0
19	1½	Mirado♦	1½	-	1½	—	—
51	10½	Mission Group♦	23½	—	7.1	-1.8	—
283½	208	Moneysupermarket	238½	+	2½	5.1	17.6
2121½	1438½	News Corp A	2065½	-	3½	—	65.8
2209½	1446	News Corp B	2127½	-	3½	—	67.8
973	554	Next 15 Group♦	949	-	6	1.5	36.9
1042	798½	Pearson	957½	-	½	2.3	18.1
5%	2½	Primorus Inv♦	3½	—	—	—	-4.5
198	107½	Quatro	140	+	15	—	5.3
85½	59	Reach♦	81	+	1½	9.2	11.9
85	62½	REACT Grp♦	76	+	1	—	—
3504	2442	Relx♦	3466	+	8	1.8	36.8
594½	462½	Rightmove♦	556½	+	8	1.6	28.2
100	58½	SpacelandPeople♦	87½	+	1	—	-0.9
257	176½	STV Group♦	257	+	2	4.4	27.3
500	152½	System1 Group♦	445	—	—	—	45.4
2757½	2243½	21st Cent Fox Inc A	2580½	+	3½	—	19.3
2594½	2044½	21st Cent Fox Inc B	2399½	-	2½	—	19.6
—	—	Vela Tech♦	—	—	—	—	5.5
380	257	Wilmington	377	—	2.7	18.5	—
897½	681½	WPP	847½	-	½	4.6	83.9
112½	75	Zinc Media♦	77½	—	—	—	-0.2

Natural resources

½	½	ADM Energy♦	½	—	—	—	-0.5
—	—	Advance Energy♦	½	—	—	—	-0.1
22	11½	AFC Energy♦	21½	+	1	—	-9.1
55½	23½	Afentra PLC♦	55½	+	2	—	—
—	—	Alba Mineral Res♦	—	—	—	—	10.0
½	—	Alien Metals♦	½	—	—	—	-5.6
90½	36½	Alumina	90½	+	2	—	—
1%	¼	Aminex	1½	—	—	—	—
1%	—	Amur Mines Corp♦	—	—	—	—	-0.5
4869½	3338½	Anglo Amer Plat	3338½	-	30½	—	15.7
2773½	1670½	Anglo American	2680	+	2½	2.8	—
119	42	Anglo Asian Mng♦	65½	+	2	4.9	95.7
2393	1293	Antofagasta	2393	+	28	1.2	36.0
3½	1½	Arc Minerals♦	1½	+	½	—	-7.7
3	1½	Ariana Res♦	3	+	½	—	20.4
—	—	Ardie Resources♦	½	—	—	—	-2.9
1%	½	Armadale Cap♦	½	—	—	—	18.7
1½	½	Asiamet Rsrc♦	1½	—	—	—	-6.2
485½	286	Atlatlaya Mine	485½	+	5½	1.4	20.8
—	—	Baron Oil♦	—	—	—	—	-6.0
2½	½	Bonville Mining♦	½	—	—	—	-2.8
—	—	Bezzant Res♦	—	—	—	—	1.0
2700	2175	BHP Group	2436	+	36	5.0	21.3
3	1½	Border & Shn Pet♦	2½	+	½	—	—
42½	15½	Bougainville	32	+	½	—	—
1%	—	BowlLeven♦	—	—	—	—	-0.4
558	444½	BPI♦	491½	—	—	—	4.6
10	3½	Cadence Min♦	4½	—	—	—	-3.0
2%	1½	Cadogan Petrol	2%	—	—	—	—
1095	720	Caledonia Mining♦	850	+	25	5.4	—
6½	2½	Caspian Sunrise♦	3½	—	—	—	—
130½	78½	Centamin	128	+	1	2.8	20.8
228½	152½	Cent Asia Metals♦	228½	+	2½	7.9	—
1%	2½	Chaarat Gold♦	4	—	—	—	-1.1
17½	6½	Charlot Oil & Gas♦	7½	-	½	—	-4.9
1%	—	China Nonfer Gold♦	1½	—	—	—	—
—	—	Clantarf Energy♦	—	—	—	—	0.6
35	14	Condor Gld♦	28½	—	—	—	—

12 month	High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
1½	½		Corcel♦	½	...	...	-2.1
987½	72½		DRD Gold	72½	+ 1½	...	8.5
½	½		ECR Minerals♦	½	...	...	-1.7
1½	½		Empyrean Energy♦	½	...	...	1.1
2180	1250		Endeavour	1808	+ 57	3.7	...
18½	12		EnQuest	15½	...	...	-1.3
3½	1½		Eurasia Mining♦	1½	...	...	-2.8
1%	½		Europa Oil&Gas♦	½	...	...	...
104½	43		Ferrepro	46½	- ½	0.3	...
691½	440½		Fresnillo♦	639½	+ 24½	0.7	27.2
...	...		G3 Exploration♦	28	...	...	-2.6
19½	8		Galantas Gold♦	9½	...	...	-0.8
10%	7½		GCM Resources♦	5½	...	½	-9.1
23½	7½		Gem Diamonds	13½	+ ½	...	...
15	5		Getech♦	9½	...	...	-1.4
501½	368½		Glencore	501½	+ 4½	4.5	18.8
½	...		Global Petro♦	...	...	...	-0.9
1504½	1319½		Gold Fields	1319½	+ 52½	...	21.3
8½	5½		Goldplate♦	8	...	...	6.0
3½	2½		Goldstone Res♦	2½	...	...	-9.9
11½	5½		Greafid Gld♦	8½	+ 1½	...	...
157	77		Griffin Mining♦	153	+ 1	37.0	...
143½	84½		Gulf Keystone	137½	+ 3½	...	3.9
17½	9½		Harland & Wolff Grp♦	9½	- ½	...	-0.1
172½	68½		Hochschild	172½	+ 4½
172	½		Horizonte Minr♦	½	-0.1
446	197½		Hunting PLC	446	+ 8	1.8	8.1
...	...		Independent Res♦



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'Butcher of Tehran' who became Iran's president
Ebrahim Raisi
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Obituaries

Frank Ifield

Yodelling Australian country singer who had a string of hits in the early Sixties and, along the way, gave a leg up to the Beatles

A startled cow in an Australian milking-shed was the first audience for Frank Ifield's yodelling. "She stopped her feeding, let out a deep, vibrating grunt and jerked her head around," the country singer later recalled. "Her big baleful eyes met my own startled gaze."

The 15-year-old had not intended to let out a yodel that morning — the falsetto sound had risen from him unbidden, he claimed — but he liked how it felt, as well as the bovine reaction it evinced, so he ran with a sloshing pail to his mother, and taking "a deep breath, uttered a silent prayer that it would happen again." It did, and his mother was impressed too.

The singer may have been curating his own mythology a little, but there was no doubting his yodelling abilities. A decade later, in May 1962, they were to avert his imminent obscurity when he was struggling to make it as a pop star in the UK. He recorded a cover of *I Remember You* at Abbey Road, complete with mouth organ, yodel and some echo which added to a drawn-out "y-o-u". Within six weeks the disc was pressed and in the charts, and — after selling over 100,000 copies in one day — it reached No 1 in the middle of July.

The infectious song was everywhere, selling millions around the world, and was soon included in the stage act of a nascent group, the Beatles. Their paths were to cross that autumn when Ifield agreed to let them join his tour — an agreement that he honoured despite the band being booed by a Peterborough audience. Not only were the Beatles influenced by the mouth organ on *I Remember You*, which featured on their first release *Love Me Do*, but also by the falsetto singing. The breathy, upper

The harmonies on the song Please Please Me were inspired by Ifield

register harmonies evident on the Beatles next single, *Please Please Me*, were inspired in part by Ifield.

Little did Ifield realise that his encouragement of the Liverpool group would lead to his eclipse. In February 1963 his emphatic version of *The Wayward Wind* vied for No 1 with *Please Please Me*. Of more immediate concern was the behaviour of Ifield's latest girlfriend, Iris Caldwell, sister of the singer Rory Storm. She was also dating Paul McCartney, and, taking advantage of Ifield's short-sightedness, went with McCartney to an Ifield concert at the Liverpool Empire. In second-row seats, they were in fact visibly holding hands, something which, in his professionalism, Ifield endured until the end of the show, when he came to the front of the stage and said, "I'd like to sing a song that's a great favourite of mine. It's called *He'll Have to Go*" — his finger pointed towards McCartney. (In fact, she broke up with both of them, and later married Shane Fenton, who became Alvin Stardust.)

Meanwhile, a year before the Beatles' arrival in America, Ifield bucked the fate endured by another big singing star of the time, Cliff Richard: for *I Remember You* was a hit over there, and, on his return, *I'm Confessin'* was another No 1



Ifield at the height of his fame, and his album from 1963. He later founded a country music festival and hosted a TV show

while *Nobody's Darlin' But Mine* made the top five. With *Mule Train*, it looked as if he was faltering, but then a double A-side of two standards — *Say It Isn't So* and *Don't Blame Me* — reached No 8. Through 1964, he continued with a series of such souped-up country numbers, always interesting, always splendidly sung, but they no longer reached the Top 20.

Francis Edward Ifield was born in Radford, near Coventry, in 1937, when his parents, Richard and Hannah, were in the middle of what was intended as a five-year stay to make good the money impossible to earn in an Australia beset by the Depression. Ifield's father was an engineer, with a coolly pragmatic view of the world. He was employed by Lotus, and in due course, as the war obliged them to stay on, he was engaged in work on Frank Whittle's jet engine, the fuel system — the Ifield pump — being his contribution to the invention. With the end of the war, the family returned to Australia, to which their forebears had moved in the 19th century. Some were of Scottish origin, others from Ifield in Kent: among them, one had been transported for pig-stealing.

By now, Richard Ifield was part of research and development at Lucas's

Australian division. The family, which included six sons, set up home at Exeter, 100 miles from Sydney, before moving to Dural, where a factory stood next to 90 acres of bushland which they farmed. It was here, after the birth of another brother, that Ifield was milking the cow one morning and let out his yodel.

Aged 11, young Frank, already tall, was given a guitar as a present. This he took with him to Carlingford high school and, as he learnt to play it, he discovered a taste for country music. If the cow milking had been a defining moment another was an encounter with a carnival show wrestler known as Chief and billed as a "Red Indian". Chief was famed for his "death lock", but he had fallen out with his wrestling partner so instead of his usual act he decided to do a talent search in the audience. Ifield held up his hand, and was asked on stage to sing, among other things, *Oh Boy*, *How She Could Yodel*. He won a place on the Chief's subsequent tour, at a pound a day.

He was soon emboldened to approach Southern Music publishing's Allan Crawford for original material by asserting that he already had a contract with the record label Regal Zonophone. This certainly aroused Crawford's at-

tention. And so, in the space of a lunch hour, Ifield caught a train to the label's offices, bluffed his way in and was offered a slot to perform on *Australia's Amateur Hour*.

Leaving school in December 1953, he cut his first disc, did his National Service and appeared on four radio shows a week. These appearances included one with Jimmie Rodgers at Sydney Stadium and, elsewhere, on television's *Campfire Favourites*. He performed a duet with a young Helen Reddy, which his family watched on a screen in a shop window.

He now concluded that if he was to get to the next level of success he would have to move to England. When he reached Heathrow on November 5, 1959, he was astonished to be greeted by Tommy Steele as well as the press, with one reporter describing him as "wearing a weary smile and a suit with turned-back cuffs". Billed by an assiduous promoter as "Australia's new singing sensation", he made several television appearances and was given a recording contract with EMI, the label that was home to the Shadows. His first single, released early in 1960, was the pleasant *Lucky Devil*, with a B-side by Ifield himself, and his country tinge did not prevent the disc from reaching No

22 on the hit parade — a creditable start. He was soon enjoying his celebrity, and did not want for female company, but a proper hit eluded him.

He and the Shadows appeared in panto in Stockton that Christmas, and he would put in a stint with Mike and Bernie Winters in the summer of 1961 in Jersey, where on the beach he wrote *I Listen to my Heart* in ten minutes. Then one night in Chester, when a band failed to show up, he performed *She Taught Me How to Yodel* — to the audience's delight. Word spread, bringing a bigger audience when he appeared with the Shadows at the Liverpool Empire.

Following the success of *I Remember You*, and his follow up No 1 hits *Lovesick Blues* and *Wayward Wind* — making him the second artist, after Elvis Presley, to score three consecutive No 1 singles in the UK — Ifield headed to Nashville for a couple of years. He also got married to Gillian Bowden, a dancer with whom he appeared in the strange film *Up Jumped a Swagman*, and they had two children, Mark and Sarah. Although he made many more records he was to have only one more No 1, *Confessin' That I Love You*, and by the mid Sixties his star was fading and country music was falling out of fashion. His contract with EMI came to an end in 1968.

After this, partly living in Cornwall as a retreat from the limelight, he toured country clubs, recorded for other labels, including his own Frank Ifield Records, and got divorced. In the mid-Eighties he returned to Australia for what he thought would be a brief visit but, in the meanwhile, stress had brought on pneumonia which led to a collapsed

His body of work is that of a fine singer, a man never fazed by life

lung. An operation for it had so wayward an effect on his vocal cords that he could no longer sing, let alone yodel.

This was devastating news but with his second marriage, to Carole Wood, a flight attendant, he found a new vitality and turned his energies to encouraging others, whether writing in an Australian magazine *Variety Today*, working as a TV scout, hosting his own show *It's Country Today*, or founding Sydney's Premier Country Music Festival — held in Sydney's Hills District where he and Carole settled.

If in some memories he remains merely a near-novelty, the great body of his work is that of a fine singer, a man never fazed by life, and always blessed with humour. He was ruefully chuffed that one of his LPs, in some rare pressings, now commands more than \$20,000: as an early attempt at introducing the Beatles to America, there appeared *Frank Ifield and the Beatles On Stage*. In fact, they were neither performing together nor on stage, this was simply a compilation of studio tracks by which the label hoped to bring along the group on Ifield's slipstream.

Frank Ifield OAM, singer, was born on November 30, 1937. He died in his sleep on May 18, 2024, aged 86

Ebrahim Raisi

Hardline president of Iran and protégé of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei with a fearsome reputation as 'the Butcher of Tehran'

In 1988, at the end of the Iran-Iraq War, Ebrahim Raisi earned himself the nickname "the Butcher of Tehran". He was one of four members of the so-called "death committee", which ordered the execution of several thousand political opponents of Iran's Islamic regime. Serving as a prosecutor in the Iranian capital, he allegedly presided over their summary trials, supervised their torture and oversaw their executions.

Raisi never expressed any remorse for what a fellow ayatollah, Hossein Ali Montazeri, much later called "the biggest crime in the history of the Islamic Republic". At a press conference in 2021, Raisi declared: "If a judge, a prosecutor, has defended the security of the people he should be praised."

The black-turbaned, grey-bearded cleric was well rewarded for his decades of loyal and unquestioning service to his hardline masters, notably his mentor Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's present supreme leader.

He rose rapidly through the ranks of Iran's judiciary despite lacking much in the way of charisma, or any outstanding religious or political qualifications. He was appointed to key positions within the regime at a relatively early age.

Having brutally suppressed protests over the rigged presidential election of 2009 and soaring fuel prices in 2019, he was elected president himself in 2021 in a ballot from which all moderates and reformists had been barred.

As chief enforcer of Khamenei's policies he subsequently oversaw the sharp escalation in the long-simmering conflict between Iran and Israel following the Hamas attacks of October 7; Iran's accelerated drive to produce weapons-grade uranium after the collapse of its 2015 nuclear deal with the West; and the crushing of the nationwide protests that erupted in 2022 following the death in custody of Mahsa Amini, a young woman arrested for wearing her hijab improperly.

Ebrahim Raisi was born in a village near Mashhad, Iran's second city and site of one of Shia Islam's holiest shrines, in 1960. He was the son of a family of devout clerics. At the age of 15 he enrolled in a seminary in the holy

city of Qom, and in his late teens joined the escalating protests against the US-backed Shah of Iran until the Shah was toppled by the Islamic Revolution of 1979. He was reportedly one of 70 young seminarians chosen by Ayatollah Khomeini's new regime for a crash course in statecraft and management that was taught, in part, by Khamenei.

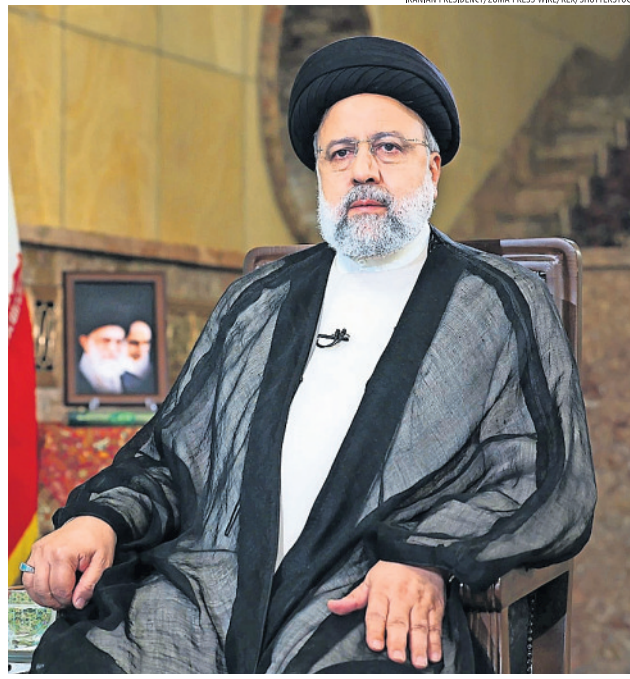
At 20 Raisi joined the judiciary and served as a prosecutor in several provincial cities. By 25 he was deputy prosecutor in Tehran, which was how he came to sit on the "death committee" in 1988. The executions of political prisoners lasted for five months and the victims were mostly members of the Mojahedin-e Khalq (MEK, or the People's Mojahedin). According to Amnesty International, "thousands of political dissidents were systematically subjected to enforced disappearance in Iranian detention facilities across the country and extrajudicially executed". Many "were subjected to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in the process". It was one of the bloodiest episodes in the Islamic Republic's singularly bloody history.

Khomeini died in 1989, and Khamenei succeeded him as supreme leader. Like Raisi, Khamenei was a native of Mashhad.

He was also a close ally of Raisi's hardline father-in-law, Ayatollah Alam al-Hoda (little is known of Raisi's private life except that his wife, Jamileh, teaches at Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran and they had two daughters).

Khamenei appointed his protégé as chief prosecutor in Tehran that same year, then head of the General Inspection Office in 1994. In 2004 Raisi was named first deputy chief justice of Iran, putting him in charge of a system of revolutionary courts that routinely violated fundamental human rights and was bent on crushing all dissent, blasphemy and "crimes against the security of the state".

He helped to suppress the so-called "Green Revolution" that erupted after Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's blatantly rigged presidential election victory in 2009. He also helped to try to convict foreigners and dual citizens on spurious charges so that they could be used in prisoner swaps or as political pawns in



Raisi in a television interview less than two weeks before his death; left, a police motorcycle burns during protests after the death in custody of Mahsa Amini

subsequent negotiations with western governments.

In 2006 Raisi was appointed to the 86-member Assembly of Experts, which selects Iran's supreme leaders. In 2014 he was made attorney-general, and as such presided over one of the highest execution rates in the world. Two years after that he was appointed custodian of Astan Quds Razavi, the organisation that administers the huge Imam Reza shrine complex in Mashhad. The shrine attracts millions of pilgrims, and generates billions of dollars in revenue for Khamenei.

More signs of preferment followed. In 2017 Raisi was allowed to stand in the presidential election against the incumbent, Hassan Rouhani, a relative moderate. Though an uninspiring speaker, he rallied against corruption and inequality and came a respectable second with 38 per cent of the vote.

In 2019 he was appointed head of the judiciary. In that role he participated in the bloody crackdown on nationwide protests against sharp fuel price increases. As many as 1,500 protesters

were killed and thousands more arrested. That same year Raisi was one of several members of Khamenei's inner circle sanctioned by the Trump administration "for his administrative oversight over the executions of individuals who were juveniles at the time of their crime and the torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of prisoners in Iran".

Raisi was nonetheless elected to succeed Rouhani as president in 2021. It was a contest conspicuous for the regime's disqualification of all the moderate and reformist candidates. He secured 62 per cent of the vote, but the turnout was just 49 per cent — the lowest since the Islamic Revolution 42 years earlier. According to one of his opponents, the regime aligned "sun, moon and the heavens" to secure his victory. He won not because he was popular or had any great achievements to his name but because he was a trusted member of Khamenei's inner circle. As president he duly became chief enforcer of Khamenei's repressive, anti-western policies.

He inherited a dire economy, with

President Trump having reimposed crippling economic sanctions on Iran after withdrawing from the Iran nuclear deal in 2018.

Under Raisi's presidency, Iran resumed its quest for weapons-grade uranium for its nuclear programme. It also signed a 25-year co-operation agreement with China, offering cheap oil in return for investment, and began supplying drones to Russia for use in its war against Ukraine.

In 2022 Iran was rocked by further nationwide protests, this time led by women demanding an end to Islamic rule, following Mahsa Amini's death. More than 500 protesters were killed by the security forces and 20,000 were detained during the largest demonstrations the regime had faced since 2009.

After the Hamas terrorist attack on southern Israel on October 7 last year, and Israel's subsequent invasion of Gaza, Raisi praised the attack that had killed 1,200 Israelis. Many saw Iran's hand behind it. There was no proof but Iran's militant proxies — Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Houthis in Yemen and

In 1988 he oversaw the executions of thousands of political prisoners

other militias in Iraq and Syria — subsequently escalated their attacks on Israeli targets in solidarity with the Palestinians.

In April Israel destroyed an Iranian consulate building in Damascus, killing seven Iranian Revolutionary Guards. Raisi vowed that the attack would "not go unanswered". Iran attacked Israel with more than 300 drones and missiles. For the first time the two foes came into open and direct conflict, sparking fears of a full-scale regional war.

Outside Iran, Raisi was not a well-known figure. He twice delivered angry speeches to the UN general assembly in New York as president, but his fear of being arrested for human rights crimes prevented him attending the 2021 climate summit in Glasgow or the UN in Geneva last December.

Nor did the president attain the rank of ayatollah. But Khamenei is now 85 and in poor health, and at the time of Raisi's death his protégé was widely regarded as a leading contender to succeed him.

Ebrahim Raisi, president of Iran, was born on December 14, 1960. He died in a helicopter crash on May 19, 2024, aged 63



Lives remembered

Ramon Pajares



Philip Gunn writes: Sometime around the early 1980s, I noticed that many people in and around London's West End (and further afield) were carrying PVC fabricated shop-

ping bags bearing the Harrods logo in the conventional green and gold colours.

Around the same time everyone was talking up the recently arrived Inn on the Park Hotel (later to be renamed Four Seasons) and how convenient a place it was to both stay, eat and drink. That's when the idea came to me: if Harrods was making a fortune from flogging heavy-duty shopping bags — each one being a walking advert for the

store — then the same marketing/sales philosophy could surely apply to one of London's swankiest hotels.

As an extremely "wet behind the ears" ambitious young salesman, I rang Inn on the Park asking to be put through to their chief executive's office. In no time at all the phone was answered by a foreign-sounding chap — Ramon Pajares (obituary, May 9) — asking how he might help with my call. Instead of saying I'd very much like to sell him a few bags, branded in the hotel's livery, I kept my powder dry and chose to say nothing more than I had a great idea to potentially increase business and promote his brand at minimal cost.

At this point, I think he may have felt a touch sorry for me, perhaps recognising a sad young individual wanting to get a purchase order of some description. Then came the blow, when he told me his diary was fully committed for the foreseeable future and that sadly we

would not be able to meet. He must have recognised the disappointment in my voice, when, as a complete surprise, he told me he could possibly see me if I didn't mind having the meeting on a bank holiday (Good Friday as it happened). I said absolutely, I'd love to come in, even on Easter Sunday, if necessary. He laughed and said I was the first Englishman he'd ever met prepared to willingly give up his bank holiday. Furthermore, he said, "If you can be here by 8am sharp, I'll supply breakfast."

When the Good Friday morning arrived, I was armed to the teeth with my presentation and dummy bags. Mr Pajares was ecstatic with the concept and suggested that every guest would find a very smart shopping bag, with compliments of the hotel, just behind the door in each bathroom. This was the first contract I'd ever picked up. Mr Pajares was a joy to work for and we kept in touch until recently.

Alice Munro



The Rev Oliver Osmond writes: After the breakdown of her marriage and before her appointment at the University of Western Ontario, Alice Munro (obituary,

May 14) taught briefly at York University in Toronto, where my wife was an assistant professor. I still remember the conversation we had at the English faculty Christmas party in December 1973. On discovering that I was an Anglican priest, she recounted in great detail her first experience as a teenager of attending an Anglican service and how she re-allocated that experience to Del Jordan in *Lives of Girls and Women*. Since my wife ceased to be an academic to become a novelist, I often recognise real people and real past events in her fiction.

Raman Subba Row



Brian Scovel writes: Raman Subba Row (obituary, April 19) had a wonderful sense of humour.

In 2008 he was umpiring in a cricket match between the English club Stoics and a local side in Sri Lanka. A bowler bowled a succession of no balls, delaying lunchtime. Raman looked at the clock showing 1.28pm, took the balls off and announced "Lunch is ready".

As an ICC referee he could have been reprimanded in a Test match.

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Law Report

Assessing entitlement to retrial for requested person who was convicted in his absence

Supreme Court
Published on May 21, 2024

Merticariu v Judecatoria Arad, Romania
Before Lord Hodge, Lord Sales, Lord Burrows, Lord Stephens and Lord Burnett of Maldon
[2024] UKSC 10
Judgment March 6, 2024

When a court had to decide whether a person who had been convicted in his absence in a requesting state, and whose extradition was sought under a European arrest warrant, would be "entitled" to a retrial if he were extradited, it was not sufficient for it to be shown merely that there would be an opportunity for that person to apply for a retrial in the requesting state.

Such an entitlement could not be contingent on the court in the requesting state making factual findings to determine whether there should be a retrial.

The Supreme Court so held in allowing the appeal of the requested person, Ionuț-Bogdan Merticariu, from a decision of Mr Justice Chamberlain ([2022] EWHC 1507 (Admin)) dismissing Merticariu's appeal from a decision of District Judge Ezzat sitting at Westminster Magistrates' Court on October 26, 2020, ordering Merticariu's extradition to Romania following his arrest pursuant to a European arrest warrant issued by the Romanian prosecuting authority, Judecatoria Arad.

Ben Cooper KC, Malcolm Hawkes and Mary Westcott for Merticariu; Helen Malcolm KC and Stefan Hyman for the Romanian prosecuting authority.

LORD STEPHENS and LORD BURNETT, with whom the other members of the court agreed, said that the key issue in the appeal concerned the proper construction of section 20(5) of the Extradition Act 2003.

Section 20(5) imposed a duty on the judge at an extradition hearing to decide whether a requested person, convicted in their absence, would after extradition "be entitled to a retrial or (on appeal) to a review amount-

ing to a retrial" in the requesting state.

It was argued on behalf of Merticariu that there had to be an entitlement to a retrial in the requesting state which was not dependent on any contingency, except for purely procedural matters such as making an application in the manner and in the time prescribed in the requesting state.

By contrast, the prosecuting authority submitted that it was sufficient for there to be a right to apply for a retrial to a court in the requesting state even if the success of that application was contingent on the court in the requesting state finding that the requested person had not been present at, or had not been deliberately absent from, the trial.

On May 7, 2019, a European arrest warrant was issued seeking Merticariu's surrender to Romania to serve a sentence imposed on April 11, 2019, for a burglary committed on March 5, 2016. He was arrested pursuant to the warrant on September 25, 2019.

At the extradition hearing at Westminster Magistrates' Court the district judge held, ordering the extradition, that Merticariu had not been convicted in his presence, had not deliberately absented himself from his trial and that he had a right to a retrial in Romania.

On his appeal the judge held that he was bound by judicial comity to follow the reasoning of the Divisional Court in *BP v Romania* ([2015] EWHC 3417 (Admin)) that section 20(5) of the 2003 Act would be satisfied even if the right to a retrial was conditional on a finding by a court in the requesting state that the requested person was not deliberately absent from their trial. Merticariu's appeal was therefore dismissed.

The effect of section 20 of the 2003 Act was that before ordering extradition under section 21 of the Act, the judge had to be sure of any one of the circumstances in section 20. They were, under section 20(1), that the re-

quested person "was convicted in his presence"; or under section 20(3) that the requested person "deliberately absented himself from his trial"; or under section 20(5) that the requested person "would be entitled to a retrial or (on appeal) to a review amounting to a retrial".

The natural and ordinary meaning of the words in section 20(5) of the 2003 Act were plain. The judge had to decide whether the requested person was "entitled" to a retrial or (on appeal) to a review amounting to a retrial.

Furthermore, the answer to the question in section 20(5) could not be answered by saying that "perhaps" or "in certain circumstances" the requested person was entitled to a retrial or on appeal to a review amounting to a retrial. An entitlement to a retrial could not be contingent on the court in the requesting state making a factual finding that the requested person was not present at, or was not deliberately absent from, their trial. Accordingly, the Divisional Court in *BP v Romania* incorrectly construed section 20(5).

A requested person might have the right to a retrial even if the domestic law of the requesting state required him to take "procedural steps" to invoke the right. But if the entitlement to a retrial was contingent on a finding that the requested person was not deliberately absent from his trial, the proceedings leading to that finding would not naturally be referred to as a "procedural step". Rather, those proceedings in the requesting state should be regarded as involving a decision on a substantive issue.

The Divisional Court in *BP v Romania* incorrectly characterised as a procedural step an application for a retrial which was contingent on the court in the requesting state determining whether the requested person had or had not instructed a lawyer to represent her at her trial.

The construction of section 20(5) of the 2003 Act that the requested person was entitled to a retrial rather than entitled to ap-

ply for a retrial was consistent with the right of a criminal defendant to be present at trial guaranteed by Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

In *Sejdovic v Italy* (Application No 56581/00) (March 1, 2006) the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights said that the refusal to reopen proceedings conducted in the absence of the accused without any indication that the accused had waived his right to be present at his trial was a "flagrant denial of justice" so that the proceedings were "manifestly contrary to the provisions of Article 6 or the principles embodied therein".

Construing section 20(5) of the 2003 Act as requiring the executing judicial authority to decide whether there was a right to a retrial was consistent with the United Kingdom's obligation to avoid a flagrant denial of justice which would render the criminal proceedings manifestly contrary to the provisions of Article 6.

Even though the matter did not arise for determination in the present case it was appropriate to observe that the answer to the question as to whether the requested person was entitled to a retrial or an appeal amounting to a retrial was to be determined in accordance with the law of the requesting state and it was for the issuing judicial authority to provide information in the European arrest warrant or in response to a request for further information.

The executing judicial authority should not engage in a mini trial as to whether on the facts and the law of the requesting state a finding that the requested person was deliberately absent from his trial was theatrical or so remote that it could be discounted.

The appeal was allowed, the extradition order quashed and Merticariu's discharge ordered.

Solicitors: **ITN Solicitors; Crown Prosecution Service Appeals and Review Unit.**

Births, Marriages and Deaths

To book a Birth, Marriage or Death announcement in the Register, visit: newsukadvertising.co.uk for help, please call 020 7782 7553 or email BMDs@thetimes.co.uk

IREBUKE and punish all whom I love. Be in earnest, then, and turn from your sins.

Revelation 3:19 (GNB)

Bible verses are provided by the Bible Society

Births

LAND
On 14th May 2024 to Phoebe (née Hugh) and Daniel, a daughter, Tallulah Ebere Lesley, sister to Ralph.

Forthcoming Marriages

MR M. O. H. FAURE AND MISS C. I. A. BEITH

The engagement is announced between Marcus, son of Mr and Mrs Adrian Faure of Bosham Hoe, West Sussex, and Claudia, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Brendan Beith of Streatham Hill, London.

Deaths

BAIRD Ann Renee of Tower House, Old Portsmouth, widow of David Baird, sadly passed away on Thursday 2nd May 2024, aged 91. She will be greatly missed by all her family and friends. Funeral service to take place at Cambridge Crematorium, East Chapel on Friday 24th May 2024 at 4.30pm. Family flowers only please. Donations, if desired, for Alzheimer's Research UK can be made via Renee's personal in-memory page at www.peasgoodandskeates.co.uk or sent c/o Peasgood and Skeates 617 Newmarket Road Cambridge CB5 8PA. Tel: 01223 415255.

BUCHAN-HEPBURN Angela, Lady Buchan-Hepburn, passed away peacefully at home on 12th May 2024. Formerly Richard (née Scott), of Kallize Gardens, Peabshire. Mother to Jane, Simon, Nicola and the late Dorinda, much-loved grandmother and great-grandmother. Funeral at Melrose crematorium on Wednesday 5th June 2024 at 3.15pm. Inquiries to Andrew Jarman on 01665 511140.

CHALKLEY David Desmond died peacefully on 1st May 2024, aged 95. Husband of the late Barbara, much-loved father of Julia and Philip and grandfather of Theo. Private family cremation. Service of Thanksgiving for his life at St Dunstan's Church, Monks Risborough, Bucks HP27 9JF on Wednesday 5th June at 2.30pm. No flowers please but donations, if desired, to The Macular Society c/o Surman & Horwood Funeral Services, Princes Risborough (surmanandhorwood.com).

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CHAMBERS

Graham (Medburn), veterinary surgeon of Blythman & Partners, passed away on 8th May 2024, aged 59. Graham was a devoted husband to Heather, and loving father to Greg, Philippa and Grace. He will be sadly missed by all who knew him. A funeral service will be held at Northumberland Woodland Burial and Crematorium (NE65 9QJ) on Friday 31st May to celebrate the life of Graham. The service will begin at 11.15am and the family invite you to join them to be with the Cook and Barker (NE65 9JY). Family flowers only please, and we would appreciate donations to the Great North Air Ambulance Service and Vet Life.

GOODMAN Joan Marion (née Sears), aged 90, on 8th May 2024 at home. Beloved wife of the late Anthony ("Tony") and much-loved mother to Julian and Joanna, mother-in-law to Juliet, and grandmother to George, Anna and William and to Gemma and Sam. Funeral at 1.45pm on Thursday 30th May 2024 at Reading Crematorium RG4 5LP. No flowers. Inquiries AB Walker & Son Ltd 01189 573650.

MILLS Jonathan on 3rd May 2024, aged 55. Much-loved son of Geraldine, brother of David, Kate and James, partner of Sharon Lewis, devoted uncle to his many nephews and nieces. Funeral at Bentley Crematorium, Brentwood, 3.30pm, 24th May, afterwards at Brookweald CC. Memorial service St Bart's, Penn. Wolverhampton, 3pm, 31st May, then at the Mount Hotel, Tettenhall.

MORE O'FERRALL Rory Lewis David Jerome, Knight of Honour & Devotion, Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and Malta, died in Marbella on 14th May 2024, aged 76. "Tuitio Fidei et Obsequium Pauperum". Requiescat in Pace.

PALMER (James) Martin died on 21st April 2024, aged 90. Much-loved and loving husband of Margaret and father of Mark and Michael. Funeral on Friday 24th May at 11am at St Andrew's Church, Surbiton. Donations to St Andrew's and St Mark's churches or Pancreatic Cancer UK.

REEVE James, aged 84. Died at home on 10th May 2024. Painter, traveller, writer, James will be missed by many. Memorial service at All Saints Church in Dulverton at 11am on 21st June 2024.

SHAW Christopher died peacefully at home on 11th May 2024, aged 87. Beloved husband of Mary and father of David and Sylvia, grandfather to Harry and Johnny. He will be sadly missed. Donations to Christian Aid appreciated.

STEAD Edward on 15th May 2024, aged 86. Former dedicated and charismatic head of English and drama at Gravesend Grammar School. Previously of Latymer Upper School and Downing College. Much missed by family, friends and former pupils.

TIMES RADIO

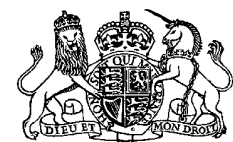
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Court Circular



Buckingham Palace

20th May, 2024

The King and Queen this evening visited the Chelsea Flower Show of the Royal Horticultural Society in the Gardens of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea.

Their Majesties later visited The King's Foundation Exhibition at the Garrison Chapel, Chelsea Barracks, London SW1, and were received by the Chief Operating Officer of The King's Foundation (Ms Emily Cherrington) and Dame Ann Limb (Deputy Chairman).

St James's Palace

20th May, 2024

The Duke of Edinburgh, Lord

High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and The Duchess of Edinburgh today carried out the following engagements.

Their Royal Highnesses this morning attended Assembly Communion at Assembly Hall, Mound Place, Edinburgh.

The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh this afternoon visited Golspie Heritage Society, Station Road, Golspie, Sutherland.

Their Royal Highnesses later visited Grantown Remakery, 44 High Street, Grantown-on-Spey, Inverness-shire.

The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh afterwards visited the Bookmark, 34 High Street, Grantown-on-Spey.

Their Royal Highnesses subsequently visited Legion Scotland Strathspey Club, 31 the Square, Grantown-on-Spey.

The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh later visited the Cairn Distillery, Craggan, Grantown-on-Spey.

Their Royal Highnesses this evening attended a Reception at Edinburgh City Chambers, 253 High Street, Edinburgh.

St James's Palace

20th May, 2024

The Princess Royal this morning departed from Royal Air Force Brize Norton, Oxfordshire, for Norway and was received this afternoon upon arrival at Royal Norwegian Air Force Air Base, Oslo Gardermoen Airport by His Majesty's Ambassador to the Kingdom of Norway (Her Excellency Ms Jan Thompson).

Colonel John Boyd is in attendance.

Kensington Palace

20th May, 2024

The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester this evening visited the Chelsea Flower Show of the Royal Horticultural Society in the Gardens of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, London SW3.

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Section 56 Planning Act 2008

Regulation 9 of The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009

Regulation 16 of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

Notice of Acceptance of an Application for a Development Consent Order

M60/M62/M66 Simister Island Interchange

Notice is hereby given that the Secretary of State has accepted an application by **National Highways Company Limited** of Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, GU1 4LZ (the "Applicant") for a Development Consent Order ("DCO") under the Planning Act 2008 (the "Application"). The Application was submitted by National Highways to the Secretary of State c/o the Planning Inspectorate (the "Inspectorate") on **2 April 2024** and was accepted for examination on **30 April 2024**. The reference number applied to the Application by the Inspectorate is TR010064.

Summary of the Application

The DCO would authorise the alteration of sections of the M60, M66 and M62, including Junction 18 of the M60, in the Metropolitan Borough of Bury between the settlements of Whitefield, Prestwich, Simister and Middleton (the "Scheme"). The Scheme comprises in summary of the following:

- Construction of a new loop road (the 'Northern Loop') to provide a new link between the M60 eastbound to the M60 southbound. This will allow drivers to continue along the M60 without having to leave the motorway, navigate the roundabout and re-join the M60.
- Widening of the M66 southbound through J18 from two lanes to four lanes.
- Widening of the existing M60 northbound to M60 westbound link road from one lane to two lanes.
- Realignment of the M66 southbound slip road to M60 J18 to accommodate the Northern Loop structure, including a new overbridge where the slip road crosses the Northern Loop and realignment of the left turn lane to the M62 eastbound.
- Conversion of the hard shoulder along the existing four-lane Controlled Motorway between M60 J17 to J18 into a running lane (both sides).
- Construction of a new hard shoulder on the M60 between J17 and J18 in the existing verge (both sides).
- Renewal of signs and signals, including new signs and street lighting at M60 J18 and its approaches, renewed traffic signals at the M60 J18 roundabout, and new gantries on the M66 southbound side and between M60 J17 to J18.
- Construction of associated drainage works including new attenuation ponds to accommodate surface water run-off from the highway and improve water quality.

The DCO would authorise the compulsory acquisition of land, interests in land and rights over land, and the powers to use land permanently and temporarily for the construction, operation and maintenance of the Scheme.

The DCO would make provisions in connection with several ancillary matters such as the stopping up of existing highways and private means of access in the vicinity of the route, and the classification of highways.

Environmental Impact Assessment

The Scheme is Environmental Impact Assessment development (EIA development) as defined by The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. The Application is therefore accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

Copies of Application Documents

The Application form and accompanying Application documents including

plans, maps and the Environment Statement are available for inspection and download free of charge on the relevant project webpage of the Planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure Planning website <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/TR010064> under the documents tab from **21 May 2024** until **5 July 2024**.

An electronic copy of the Application documents can be supplied on a USB memory stick free of charge if requested. A paper copy of the Application documents can also be supplied, but there will be a reasonable charge for paper copies to cover the cost of printing, packaging and postage up to a charge of £2,860 for a complete set of documents.

Please contact National Highways via the following contact details if you have any enquiries about any of the Application documents or to request a copy of the Application documents:

Post:

M60/M62/M66 Simister Island Interchange Project Team, National Highways,
Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

Email: M60J18SimisterIslandInterchange@nationalhighways.co.uk

Telephone: 0300 123 5000

Making a relevant representation on the Application

Any person may make a relevant representation on the Application to the Secretary of State (i.e.: giving notice of any interest in or objection to the Application). Any relevant representation relating to the Application must be submitted on a registration form and give the grounds on which it is made. The Inspectorate have issued detailed advice on registering as an interested party and making a relevant representation, to which you are advised to have regard. This Advice Note (8.2 – How to Register to Participate in an Examination) is published on the National Infrastructure Planning website under 'Legislation and Advice' and can be found at:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/advice-notes/>

The period for making a relevant representation starts on **21 May 2024** and will end at **11.59pm** on **5 July 2024**. Please note that any submitted representations to the Inspectorate will be published on the National Infrastructure Planning website for the Application.

The Registration and Relevant Representation form will be made available by the Inspectorate once the registration / relevant representation period has opened on the Inspectorate's project web page: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/TR010064>.

Alternatively, you can request a hard copy of the registration / relevant representation form by telephoning **0303 444 5000** quoting the name of the Application and the Inspectorate's reference number TR010064. The completed form must be received by the deadline for relevant representations. A completed hard copy form to be submitted to the Inspectorate should be sent to:

The Planning Inspectorate, Major Applications & Plans, 3D Temple Quay House, Temple Quay, BRISTOL, BS1 6PN

ASSOCIATED BRITISH PORTS (IMMINGHAM GREEN ENERGY TERMINAL) DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER (APPLICATION REFERENCE TR030008)

NOTICE OF CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED FURTHER CHANGES TO THE APPLICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT CONSENT

PLANNING ACT 2008, INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (APPLICATIONS: PRESCRIBED FORMS AND PROCEDURE) REGULATIONS 2009, INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2017

An application for a development consent order ("DCO") for the Immingham Green Energy Terminal (the "Project") was made by **ASSOCIATED BRITISH PORTS** ("ABP" or "the Applicant") of 25 Bedford Street, London, WC2E 9ES ("the Applicant") to the Secretary of State for Transport (the "Secretary of State") on 21 September 2023 ("the Application"). The Application was accepted for Examination on 19 October 2023, and the Examining Authority was appointed 31 October 2023 to Examine the Application. The Examination of the Application commenced on 20 February 2024, and is due to close 20 August 2024.

The Applicant consulted on proposed changes to the Application from Tuesday, 26 March 2024 to 23:59 on Wednesday, 24 April 2024. Details of those proposed changes are available on the IGET webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website at: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/TR030008>. The Application to make those changes to the Application was submitted to the Examining Authority on 3 May 2024 and the Examining Authority issued a procedural decision on 14 May 2024 confirming that the proposed changes have been accepted into the Examination.

Notice is given that the Applicant intends to submit a request to the Examining Authority to make further changes to the Application (the "Proposed Further Changes"). A description of the Proposed Further Changes is set out below. In advance of submitting the request to make the Proposed Further Changes to the Application (the "Proposed Further Changes Application"), the Applicant is undertaking a public consultation on the Proposed Further Changes (the "Proposed Further Changes Consultation"). Details of how to participate in the Proposed Further Changes Consultation are given below.

Summary of the Project

The Project for which the Applicant is seeking development consent includes a nationally significant infrastructure project ("NSIP") comprising the construction, operation and maintenance of a multi-user liquid bulk terminal which would be located on the eastern side of the Port of Immingham ("the Port") and associated development (collectively, "the Project"). The associated development would comprise the construction and operation of a green hydrogen production facility and other associated landside works for the production of green hydrogen from imported green ammonia on site.

The proposed Project consists of:

- a) The NSIP, which comprises:
 - a. A terminal for liquid bulks, comprising:
 - i. A jetty including a loading platform, associated dolphins, fenders and walkways, topside infrastructure but not limited to control rooms, marine loading arms, pipe-racks, pipelines and other infrastructure.
 - ii. A single berth, with a berthing pocket with a depth of up to 14.5m below chart datum; and
 - b. Related landside infrastructure including a jetty access ramp, a flood defence access ramp and works to raise the seawall locally under the jetty access ramp
- b) The associated development which comprises:
 - a. A corridor between the new jetty and Laporte Road which would support a private road (the 'jetty access road'), pipe-racks, pipelines to enable the ammonia import to the East Site (as described below), as well as security gates, a security building, a power distribution building and associated utilities.
 - b. The 'East Site – Ammonia Storage' – an ammonia storage tank and related plant including an ammonia tank flare stack would be constructed as well as additional buildings (including welfare building, power distribution building and a process instrumentation building), pipe-racks, pipelines, pipes, cable-racks, utilities and other infrastructure.
 - c. Construction of a culvert under Laporte Road for pipelines, pipes, cables and other conducting media linking the two parts of the East Site.
 - d. 'East Site- Hydrogen Production Facility' construction of up to three hydrogen production units and associated plant including flue gas stacks and flare stacks together with additional buildings (including process control building, power distribution buildings, process instrumentation buildings, analyser shelters), pipe-racks, pipelines, pipes, utilities and other infrastructure.
 - e. Underground pipelines, pipes, cables and other conducting media between the East and West Sites (as described below), for the transfer of ammonia, hydrogen, nitrogen and utilities, with cathodic protection against saline corrosion.
 - f. The 'West Site' - construction of up to three hydrogen production units with associated flue gas stacks and flare stacks and up to four liquefier units; hydrogen storage tanks, hydrogen trailer filling stations, a hydrogen vent stack and associated process equipment; and hydrogen vehicle and trailer filling stations, hydrogen compressors and associated process equipment together with additional buildings (including but not limited to control room and workshop building, security and visitor building, contractor building, warehouse driver administration building, safe haven building, electrical substation and metering station, power distribution buildings, process instrumentation buildings, analyser buildings and additional temporary buildings during construction), process and utility plant including cooling towers and pumps, fire water tank, instrument air equipment, pipe-racks, pipelines, pipes, cable-racks, utilities and other infrastructure.
 - g. Formation of temporary construction and laydown areas on Queens Road and off Laporte Road.
 - h. Temporary removal of street furniture and modification of overhead cables on Kings Road associated with the transport of large construction components from the Port to the Site.
 - i. Further associated development on a site wide basis consisting of works such as site clearance, creation of additional construction compounds, utility works, landscaping and street works.
- c) In addition to the NSIP and associated development works described above, ancillary works that would not necessarily constitute development are to be undertaken on a site-wide basis, such as vegetation removal, the installation of fencing and the demobilisation of construction works.

Development consent is required for the Project to the extent that the development is or forms part of an NSIP pursuant to sections 14(1)(j), 24(2) and 24(3)(c) of the Planning Act 2008, being the proposed alteration of harbour facilities (i.e. the Port) that are wholly in England and in waters adjacent to England, and the effect of alteration would be to increase the quantity of material the embarkation or disembarkation of which the facilities are capable of handling by at least the relevant quantity of material per year, which in the case of the facilities for cargo ships is 5 million tonnes per annum. It is for this reason the Project falls within the remit of the Secretary of State's decision-making powers.

The Development Consent Order (if granted) would also authorise the compulsory acquisition of interests in land and rights over land, and the powers to use land permanently for the construction and operation of the Project. A map showing the location of the Project can be viewed on the National Infrastructure Planning website at the following link: https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/TR030008/TR030008-000367-TR030008_Immingham_Green_Energy_Terminal_4.1_Location_Plan.pdf

Environmental Impact Assessment Development

The Project constitutes an Environmental Impact Assessment development for the purposes of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 and accordingly the Application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement ("ES").

Details of the environmental information relating to the Proposed Further Changes are included in the document submitted to the Examining Authority to formally notify them of the Applicant's intention to submit the Proposed

Further Changes Application ("the Proposed Further Changes Notification Report"), a summary of which is provided under the heading 'Summary of the Proposed Further Changes' below. There are no new or different likely significant environmental effects in relation to the Project arising from the Proposed Further Changes, either individually or collectively.

Copies of the Application

The Application form and accompanying Application documents including a map showing the location of the Project and other plans, maps and the ES and Non-technical Summary of the ES ("NTS") (together the "Application Documents") can be viewed and downloaded free of charge on the IGET webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website at: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/TR030008>.

Copies of the Application Documents can also be requested from the Applicant by emailing the following address or writing to the Applicant at enquiries@imminghamget.co.uk or IGET, PO Box 76780, London WC1A 9SJ (quoting reference: Immingham Green Energy Terminal). Please note the Applicant reserves the right to charge for its reasonable costs associated with the provision of hard copies of the Application Documents.

Details of the development consent process and how to participate are set out in PINS's 'Advice Note Eight: Overview of the nationally significant infrastructure project process for members of the public and others', which is available to view free of charge at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-advice-note-eight-overview-of-the-nationally-significant-infrastructure-planning-process-for-members/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-advice-note-eight-overview-of-the-nationally-significant-infrastructure-planning-process-for-members>.

Summary of the Proposed Further Changes to the Application

The need for the Proposed Further Changes has arisen following the date of submission of the Application due to ongoing engagement with stakeholders and further design evolution of the Project. In summary, the Proposed Further Changes are as follows:

Change 5(a): minor adjustments to the accesses from the A1173 to Work No.7 (shown on the Street Works and Accesses Plan [REP3-016] as Access AB and Access AC).

Change 5(b): a minor reduction in the area of public highway proposed to be permanently stopped up to the south of Laporte Road and associated minor reduction in Work No. 3.

Change 5(c): adjustments to the speed limit change proposed along Laporte Road to introduce a new section with a 40mph speed limit and reduce the section proposed to be subject to a 30mph speed limit.

Change 6: a new area of permanent stopping up in the vicinity of an access from Kings Road to Work No. 7 (shown as Access AA on the Street Works and Accesses Plan [REP3-016]).

Change 7: a reduction in the area of Work No. 9 (which is proposed to be used for temporary construction purposes) and associated reduction in the Order limits.

Consultation is also being undertaken on updates to information contained in the Environmental Statement relating to the following proposals, which would result in changes to the proposed mitigation in the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan [REP3-026]:

Change 8: a change to the ground protection methodology for Work No. 9 to allow the installation of a geotextile layer and a layer of compacted fill material instead of the installation of ground matting.

Change 9: a change to the terrestrial piling methodology to include the potential use of driven piling in Work Nos. 3, 5 and 7.

A full description of the Proposed Further Changes, together with explanations of why they are proposed and an appraisal of the impacts of the Proposed Further Changes, are provided in the Proposed Further Changes Notification Report published as part of the consultation on the Proposed Further Changes. The Proposed Further Changes Notification Report has been submitted to the Examining Authority in accordance with Step 1 of Figure 1 in PINS's 'Advice Note Sixteen: Requests to change applications after they have been accepted for examination' ("Advice Note Sixteen") and contains the required information set out in Figure 2a of Advice Note Sixteen. Advice Note Sixteen is available to view free of charge at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/advice-notes/advice-note-16/>.

The Proposed Further Changes Notification Report can be viewed on our website free of charge at the following link: www.imminghamget.co.uk

An electronic copy of the Proposed Further Changes Notification Report can be supplied free of charge by ABP on a USB stick, provided on request. Paper copies of the Proposed Further Changes Notification Report can also be supplied on request, but there will be a reasonable charge for paper copies to cover the cost of printing, packaging and postage up to a maximum charge of £300.00.

If you have any questions about the Proposed Further Changes Notification Report, or wish to request a copy, you can email enquiries@imminghamget.co.uk, or write to IGET, PO Box 76780, London, WC1A 9SJ (quoting reference: Immingham Green Energy Terminal), or call Freephone 0800 175 3233.

Responding to the Proposed Further Changes Consultation

The Proposed Further Changes Consultation takes place from **Tuesday, 21 May 2024 until 23:59 on Wednesday, 19 June 2024**.

Any person can respond to the Proposed Further Changes Consultation. All responses must be received by us in writing by **23:59pm on Wednesday, 19 June 2024**.

You can respond to the Proposed Further Changes Consultation by submitting your views to us in **writing** through the following channels:

- **Emailing:** enquiries@imminghamget.co.uk
- **Writing to:** IGET, PO Box 76780, London WC1A 9SJ. (quoting reference: Immingham Green Energy Terminal)

If you have any questions on the Proposed Further Changes or would like to request a meeting with the Project team to discuss the Proposed Changes, you can contact us at enquiries@imminghamget.co.uk or call us on **Freephone 0800 175 3233**.

The Proposed Further Changes Notification Report will also be available to view in hard copy in the following locations from **Tuesday 21 May 2024 to Wednesday 19 June 2024**:

- Immingham Town Council, Civic Centre, Pelham Road, Immingham DN40 1QF, open **Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm**; and on **Saturday from 9am to 1pm**.
- Grimsby Central Library, Town Hall Square, Grimsby DN31 1HG, open **Tuesday to Friday from 8:30am to 5:30pm**; and on **Saturday from 9am to 1pm**.

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SEPTEMBER 2025

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Tue 30 **St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada**
En route from New England to Canada, this charming and historic port, St John's is the capital of Newfoundland and the oldest city in Canada. Dating back to the 16th century, its long heritage is reflected in some well-preserved historic buildings. As it is right by the easternmost point (Cape Spear) of North America, it has always been a busy port with many ships and travellers passing through

OCTOBER 2025

Thu 2 **Gaspé, Québec, Canada**
Rising majestically from the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Gaspé Peninsula is recognised by 'National Geographic Traveller' as one of Canada's 50 Places of a Lifetime
Fri 3 **Sept Îles, Québec, Canada**
Sun 5 - **Québec City, Québec, Canada (overnight)**
Mon 6 Always a highlight of a 'Fall Foliage' cruise along the New England and Canadian coastline, Québec City is a living testimonial to the grace of Old Europe. Its steep cobbled streets make an atmospheric counterpoint to the trees blazing crimson, yellow and gold and creating one of the most dazzling spectacles on earth. Artists display their wares in its tree-lined squares and Europhiles can shop for fine antiques and savour fine coffee, croissants and La Vie Francais in Parisian style pavement cafe



Tue 7 **Saguenay, Québec, Canada**
Thu 9 **Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada**
The largest city on Prince Edward Island, you'll find Charlottetown a delight to explore. Enjoy a round of golf at the Belvedere Golf Club, witness breathtaking scenery and wildlife as you walk or cycle the Confederation Trail, or shop at Peake's Wharf Historic Waterfront
Fri 10 **Îles de la Madeleine, Canada**
Sun 12 **Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada**
Halifax, Gateway to Atlantic Canada, is the capital region of Nova Scotia and is a lively and colourful combination of urban and rural living at its best. The historic downtown waterfront areas of Halifax and Dartmouth are perfect for discovering on foot
Mon 13 **Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada**
Sun 19 **Arrive in Southampton**
Dates not mentioned are spent relaxing at sea



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Around Britain

Key: b=bright, c=cloud, d=drizzle, pc=partly cloudy, du=dull, f=fair, fg=fog, h=hail, m=mist, r=rain, sh=showers, sl=sleet, sn=snow, s=sun, t=thunder
**previous day **data not available

	Temp C	Rain mm	Sun hr*
midday yesterday			
Aberdeen	14	S	0.0 0.7
Aberporth	18	C	0.0 4.6
Anglesey	20	PC	0.0 12.6
Aviemore	16	C	0.0 3.5
Barnstaple	21	S	0.0 **
Belfast	15	PC	0.0 **
Birmingham	15	B	0.0 13.3
Bournemouth	19	S	2.0 10.3
Bridlington	14	C	0.0 **
Bristol	17	S	0.0 11.4
Cambridge	19	S	0.0 11.6
Cardiff	17	S	0.0 13.8
Edinburgh	15	C	0.0 4.2
Exeter	12	C	0.0 9.8
Glasgow	15	C	0.0 6.2
Hereford	16	B	0.0 **
Herstmonceux	18	S	0.0 7.3
Ipswich	16	PC	0.0 12.3
Isle of Man	15	PC	0.0 14.2
Isle of Wight	19	S	0.0 **
Jersey	18	PC	0.0 7.9
Kewick	17	C	0.0 **
Kinloss	18	C	0.0 4.2
Leeds	12	C	0.0 **
Lerwick	12	S	0.0 3.1
Leuchars	13	S	0.0 1.8
Lincoln	14	C	0.0 14.6
Liverpool	18	S	0.0 **
London	18	S	0.0 9.8
Lyneham	16	S	0.0 11.4
Manchester	17	C	0.0 14.4
Margate	13	C	0.0 11.4
Milford Haven	19	S	0.0 **
Newcastle	12	C	0.0 **
Nottingham	13	C	0.0 13.7
Orkney	14	S	0.0 0.1
Oxford	16	S	0.0 **
Plymouth	20	S	0.0 **
Portland	18	S	0.0 **
Scilly, St Mary's	17	S	0.2 **
Shoreham	19	S	0.0 7.4
Shrewsbury	14	C	0.0 14.3
Snowdonia	19	PC	0.0 **
Southend	15	PC	0.0 11.6
South Uist	17	PC	0.0 **
Stornoway	15	S	0.0 0.2
Tiree	15	S	0.2 **
Whitehaven	14	C	0.0 12.6
Wick	13	S	0.0 **
Yeovilton	17	S	0.0 11.4

The world

All readings local midday yesterday

Alicante	25	PC	Madeira	20	B
Amsterdam	19	SH	Madrid	18	B
Athens	25	S	Malaga	24	PC
Auckland	14	B	Malloreca	22	R
Bahrain	36	S	Malta	25	S
Bangkok	34	PC	Melbourne	12	B
Barbados	31	PC	Mexico City	28	PC
Barcelona	21	PC	Miami	33	B
Beijing	25	S	Milan	21	PC
Beirut	27	S	Mombasa	32	PC
Belgrade	24	B	Montreal	24	PC
Berlin	19	T	Moscow	22	PC
Bombay	26	PC	Mumbai	35	**
Bordeaux	15	B	Munich	22	S
Brussels	19	PC	Nairobi	25	PC
Bucharest	23	S	Naples	27	S
Budapest	25	**	New Orleans	29	S
Buenos Aires	12	S	New York	22	B
Cairo	39	S	Nice	21	B
Calcutta	34	T	Nicosia	28	**
Canberra	15	S	Oslo	16	S
Cape Town	19	S	Paris	21	B
Chicago	23	B	Perth	25	S
Copenhagen	21	PC	Prague	21	PC
Corfu	31	S	Reykjavik	9	SH
Delhi	43	**	Riga	22	PC
Dubai	35	S	Rio de Janeiro	29	B
Dublin	19	PC	Riyadh	37	S
Faro	19	PC	Rome	20	R
Florence	25	PC	San Francisco	20	PC
Frankfurt	21	PC	Santiago	15	S
Geneva	20	S	Sao Paulo	22	B
Gibraltar	21	PC	Seoul	20	B
Helsinki	17	S	Seychelles	31	R
Hong Kong	25	SH	Singapore	28	R
Honolulu	26	C	St Petersburg	18	PC
Istanbul	21	PC	Stockholm	13	S
Jerusalem	35	S	Sydney	17	B
Johannesburg	22	S	Tel Aviv	35	S
Kuala Lumpur	27	T	Tenerife	21	B
Kyiv	**	**	Tokyo	19	B
Lanzarote	24	PC	Vancouver	14	PC
Las Palmas	23	PC	Venice	22	PC
Lima	16	M	Vienna	22	PC
Lisbon	19	PC	Warsaw	23	PC
Los Angeles	19	PC	Washington	22	B
Luxor	41	S	Zurich	21	S

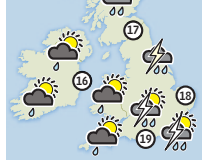
Five days ahead

Unsettled with showers or longer spells of rain, which may be heavy and thundery

Tomorrow

Spells of heavy and perhaps thundery rain in northern England and Scotland. Sunny spells and scattered showers elsewhere, some of which may be thundery.

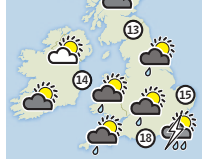
Max 20C, min 6C



Thursday

Showery rain in Scotland and northern England. Sunny spells and scattered showers in southern England and Wales. Largely dry with sunny periods in Ireland.

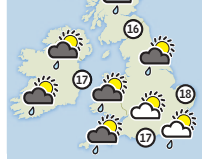
Max 18C, min 6C



Friday

Outbreaks of rain in Scotland, northern England and Ireland. Sunshine and showers in southwest England and Wales. Largely dry with sunny periods elsewhere.

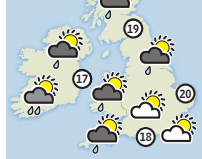
Max 19C, min 6C



Saturday

Showers with longer spells of rain spreading in later across Ireland. A few showers in Wales, southwest England, Scotland and the north of England. Sunny periods elsewhere.

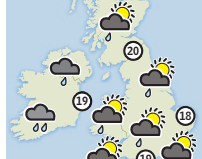
Max 20C, min 9C



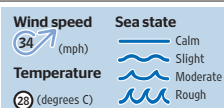
Sunday

Outbreaks of rain will spread into Ireland. Sunny spells elsewhere with the chance of a few showers.

Max 21C, min 7C

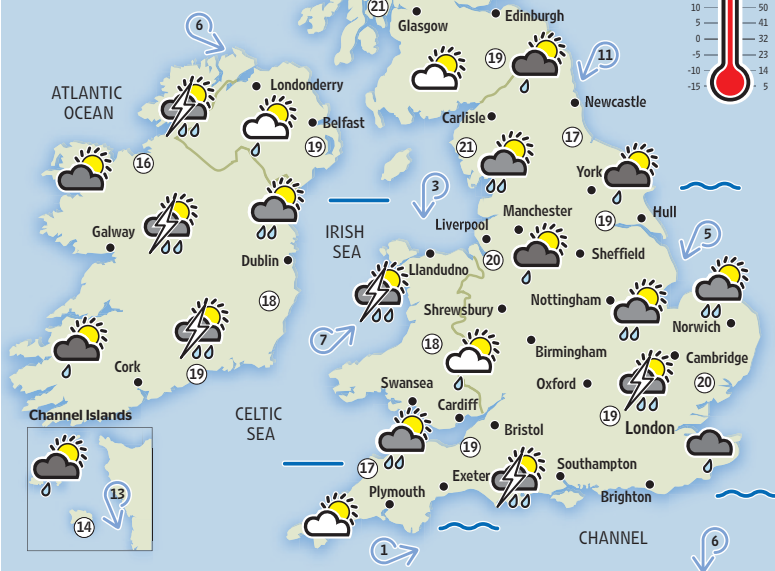


The Times weather page is provided by **WeatherQuest**



Flood alerts and warnings

At 17:00 on Monday there were 23 flood alerts and no warnings in England and no flood alerts or warnings in Wales or Scotland. For further information and updates in England visit flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk, for Wales naturalresources.wales/flooding and for Scotland SEPA.org.uk



General situation: Sunny spells with the chance of an isolated shower in western Scotland. Bright spells and scattered showers and thunderstorms elsewhere.

London, SE Eng, E Anglia: Bright spells with the chance of a few heavy showers in the morning. Mostly cloudy in the afternoon with heavy and thundery showers, perhaps merging into longer spells of showery rain later. Light northeasterly winds. Maximum 20C (68F), minimum 11C (52F).

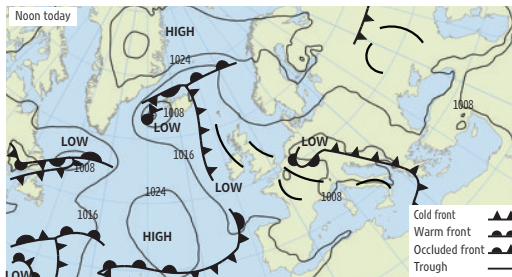
Ken S Eng, SW Eng, Mids, Channel Is, Wales, Cen N Eng, Lake District, NW Eng: Sunny periods with scattered heavy showers and thunderstorms developing through the day. Drier in the Channel Islands. Light and variable winds. Maximum 21C (70F), minimum 9C (48F).

N Ireland, Republic of Ireland: Sunny intervals with scattered heavy showers and thunderstorms. Light and variable winds. Maximum 20C (68F), minimum 8C (46F).

E Eng, NE Eng, Borders: Sunny periods with the chance of a heavy shower in the morning. Drier in the afternoon with hazy sunny intervals. Gentle northeasterly winds. Maximum 19C (66F), minimum 9C (48F).
SW Scotland, Argyll, Cen Highland, Edinburgh and Dundee, Aberdeen, NE Scotland, NW Scotland, N Isles: Sunny spells with the chance of an isolated heavy shower. Gentle east or southeasterly winds. Maximum 23C (73F), minimum 9C (48F).

Tides

Tidal predictions. Heights in metres		
Today	HT	LT
Aberdeen	13:03	3.8
Avonmouth	06:32 11:6	18:56 11.9
Belfast	10:41 3.2	23:06 3.1
Cardiff	06:17 11.0	18:44 11.2
Devonport	05:04 4.9	17:29 4.9
Dover	10:44 5.9	22:56 6.1
Dublin	11:11 3.6	23:24 3.7
Falmouth	04:40 4.6	17:03 4.6
Greenock	11:50 3.1	23:00 3.1
Harwich	11:24 3.7	23:35 3.6
Holyhead	09:53 5.0	22:16 5.0
Hull	05:44 6.6	17:58 6.6
Leith	02:03 4.8	14:21 4.9
Liverpool	10:39 8.3	23:00 8.4
London Bridge	01:05 6.4	13:29 6.4
Lowestoft	09:22 2.3	21:02 2.3
Milford Haven	05:39 6.1	18:00 6.2
Morecambe	10:50 8.3	23:11 8.4
Newhaven	10:40 5.9	22:57 6.1
Newquay	04:32 6.1	16:53 6.2
Oban	05:11 3.5	17:37 3.5
Penzance	04:06 4.9	16:27 5.0
Portsmouth	11:07 4.2	23:25 4.4
Shoreham	10:44 5.4	23:02 5.7
Southampton	09:59 3.9	22:23 4.2
Swansea	05:44 8.4	18:07 8.5
Tees	03:08 4.9	15:20 5.0
Weymouth	06:05 1.7	18:41 1.9



Synoptic situation

A slack pressure pattern across southern Britain and Ireland will bring an unsettled day with scattered heavy showers and thunderstorms. Sunny spells with the risk of one or two isolated heavy showers. Low pressure will spread in from the southeast during tonight and into tomorrow bringing spells of heavy and perhaps thundery rain to the north and east.

Highs and lows

24hrs to 5pm yesterday
Warmest: Chivenor, Devon, 22.6C
Coldest: Altnaharra, 3.0C
Wettest: Swanage, Dorset, 4.2mm
Sunniest: Hawarden, 15.0hrs*

Sun and moon

For Greenwich
Sun rises: 04:59
Sun sets: 20:54
Moon rises: 18:58
Moon sets: 04:03 Wed
Full Moon: May 23

Hours of darkness

Aberdeen	22:03-04:05
Belfast	22:03-04:05
Birmingham	21:36-04:30
Cardiff	21:36-04:40
Exeter	21:34-04:45
Glasgow	22:03-04:21
Liverpool	21:45-04:30
London	21:24-04:28
Manchester	21:42-04:27
Newcastle	21:40-04:16
Norwich	21:24-04:17
Penzance	21:40-04:56
Sheffield	21:39-04:24

Weather Eye

Paul Simons



For bird-spotters keen on seeing puffins, one recent new location showing great promise is in the Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard, deep in the Arctic. There, Atlantic puffins are thriving in a fjord called Kongsfjorden on the west coast, where the bird was only occasionally spotted some 40 years ago.

A range of other wildlife newcomers from southern waters are also setting up home at Kongsfjorden, such as Atlantic fish including herring, capelin and cod. In the past, the shoreline of the fjord was covered in sea ice for most of the year but it is melting away and so the native animals of Svalbard are having to change their habits, with polar bears now walking along the shore feasting on the eggs of seabirds nesting there; previously the bears relied on sea ice for hunting. Without the ice, thick strands of kelp and other algae are flourishing along the shore, while abundant jellyfish are flourishing in the newly exposed seawater.

Meanwhile, ringed seals that used to be plentiful in the fjord have left as the sea ice melted. The seals used to build their dens in ice during springtime but when ice melted their pups became exposed to predatory birds. A long-running survey of black-legged kittiwakes — seabirds that feed on the sea surface — also revealed that their diet of fish changed dramatically in 2007 to feeding on Atlantic fish rather than Arctic fish, following a large influx of Atlantic water into the fjord during the winter of 2006.

The Arctic is warming four times as fast as the rest of the world owing to climate change, but Kongsfjorden is warming even faster and no longer freezes over the winter. The western side of Svalbard where Kongsfjorden sits is exposed to an offshoot of the Atlantic Gulf Stream, and the temperature of the water in winter rose from 0.3C in 2004 to 4C in 2017. As a result, the glaciers of Kongsfjorden have gone into rapid retreat. In contrast, the eastern reach of Svalbard is hit by an Arctic ocean current that keeps its icy temperatures stable.

Speak directly to one of our forecasters on 09065 777675

8am to 5pm daily (calls are charged at £1.55 plus network extras)

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Sport

DeChambeau captured our hearts – there is no LIV golfer we miss more

The endearing, divisive American reminded PGA Tour just how much it misses him, writes **Tom Kershaw**

Bryson DeChambeau did not leave Louisville with the Wanamaker Trophy or a police mugshot but no player captured the hearts and minds of spectators on Sunday quite like golf's madcap scientist. There were Olympian fist pumps, childlike roars, bizarre quotes about robotics and, above all, a blistering exhibition of shot-making in a round of 64 that so nearly forced a play-off at the US PGA Championship.

"I felt like I had my B game pretty much," DeChambeau said after finishing 20 under par for the tournament, which equalled the record score at a major championship until Xander Schauffele's triumphant birdie minutes later.

That may sound immodest but it was a testament to DeChambeau's maddening pursuit of perfection rather than a slight on his superior. The experimentation has encompassed dramatic weight gain that invited a health crisis, a 3D-printed set of single-length irons and even a brief attempt at putting side-saddle while in college.

It is fascinating to watch, and there are few greater moments of suspense in golf than when DeChambeau steps on to the tee with a driver. Closer resembling an act of assault than a smooth swing, every gung-ho blow was delivered to a wild ovation. It is the deft short game that defies the 30-year-old's stiff posture, which has underpinned much of his success.

Like him or loathe him, DeChambeau is not easily ignored — his press conference on Sunday has been viewed more than those by Schauffele, Scottie Scheffler and Justin Thomas combined. Those in the latter camp will point to DeChambeau's early years on the PGA Tour, when he seemed caught in an identity crisis between embracing kindness and rivalling Brooks Koepka for jock status.



DeChambeau's celebration at the 18th felt natural as he whipped up the crowd after they had willed his birdie putt into the hole

Ugly outbursts were aimed at cameramen, club manufacturers and once even a colony of fire ants that deigned to exist within the vicinity of his ball. Slow play and refusal to shout "fore" were further evidence of a lacking maturity, while assertions that Augusta National plays like a par 67 and plans on living to 130

years old were inevitably met with ridicule.

Those snippets will always be seized on but it would be unfair to ignore DeChambeau's endearing moments too. He enjoys interacting with fans and stays later than most to sign autographs. When he threw his ball towards a child behind the fairway

rope after making a crucial par at the 9th, DeChambeau personally intervened when it was briefly snatched by an adult, who shamelessly tried to sprint off with the souvenir.

DeChambeau's YouTube channel, which has more than 600,000 subscribers, offers a broader insight

into a personality that has mellowed — and shouts "fore" — but whose devotion to golf is undiminished, taking on various challenges like attempting to break 50 in a scramble or showing behind-the-scenes footage at tournaments.

"YouTube has helped me understand [being a true showman a little more]," he said. "When I was younger, I would have great celebrations and whatnot but I didn't know what it meant and what I was doing it necessarily for. Now I'm doing it a lot more for the fans and for the people around and trying to be a bit of an entertainer that plays good golf every once in a while."

That may seem forced but DeChambeau's behaviour at the 18th green felt natural, as he whipped up a raucous crowd after they had willed his birdie putt into the hole. His move to LIV and a lighter schedule have meant such spectacles are more infrequent but he has been playing well consistently, with three top-ten finishes at the past five majors. Being the captain of "Crushers GC", with its gaudy skull and crossbones branding, may have been a fitting nail in the coffin for some but it's hard to think of a LIV golfer the PGA Tour misses more.

Of course, no player caused such a chaotic stir at Valhalla as Scheffler, whose shocking arrest on Friday morning overshadowed much of the golf up until its thrilling conclusion on Sunday. The world No1 ultimately finished tied-eighth — a terrific result given the circumstances that also invites the question of what might have been.

But Scheffler was more concerned with the lingering doubt over whether he would be able to return home to Texas, where the Charles Schwab Challenge takes place this week at Colonial Country Club. His arraignment had been scheduled for 9am in Louisville on Tuesday but his lawyer, Steve Romines, confirmed that it had now been postponed until June 3. Scheffler is still facing four charges: second-degree assault of a police officer and three driving-related misdemeanours. Romines previously said Scheffler intended to plead not guilty to all the charges and plans to go to a trial if they are not dropped.

'If we were starting again we wouldn't call it the Premiership'

CONTINUED FROM BACK

come up with potential new names for the league over the summer. Any change would not come in until the 2025-26 season at the earliest.

The Gallagher Premiership is undergoing a shift in marketing, before a fully fledged rebrand next year which will look to celebrate the physicality, athleticism and jeopardy of rugby on the back of feedback from fans, players, broadcasters and sponsors.

That work is being led by Premiership Rugby's chief growth officer, Rob Calder, who joined the organisation in

2022 after leaving his role as the ECB's commercial director, where he helped to create the Hundred.

Premiership Rugby wants to attract new, younger fans, and is investigating whether changing the name and the logo — which is an outline of the trophy at present — would help to do that.

"As part of that [relaunch] we will consider the name," Calder told *The Times's Ruck* podcast. "Everything is on the table. We'd need to be really convinced we would move the dial by changing it. We're in that process at the moment, we're looking at the name, speaking to the broadcasters, to players,

to Gallagher about what they want to see from the league moving forward.

"There are a few things at play here. We've got equity in the Premiership — people know what it is. Is it a bit too much like the football Premier League? Yeah, probably. If I was starting from scratch I probably wouldn't call it 'the Premiership'.

"Is there something out there that will be a silver bullet and is just a name? Probably not. What's more likely is it's around a package of things we do, the way we present ourselves, and the content we generate; the whole bundle. It's an evolution. We'll not just rush into it."

Other changes to the league may come over the next few seasons — although some traditions will remain, not least the use of Twickenham for its showpiece. Premiership Rugby explored the possibility of taking its final to other venues, such as the Amex Stadium in Brighton or St James' Park in Newcastle, but has now recommitted to staging it at Twickenham until 2028, and it is likely to stay there until 2032. However, Premiership Rugby is interested in the idea of changing the format of the play-offs. Since the 2005-06 season, four teams have made the semi-finals, with the top two clubs in the regular-season

table hosting home matches against the teams in third and fourth.

One idea is for "home" semi-finals to take place at bigger grounds near the host club. Premiership Rugby's ultimate dream is to have the two play-off matches at a neutral venue for all teams on the same day. That would ape the Top 14, which stages its play-off semi-finals in a different city each year. This season they will be in Bordeaux.

Premiership Rugby's hope is that, in time, such an event would mean the clubs could make more money. Clubs at present earn about £500,000 for staging home play-off matches.

Murray spared defeat in Geneva by pollen ‘snow shower’

Tennis
John Westerby

Andy Murray was on the verge of a first-round defeat in his final tournament before the French Open when an unlikely weather stoppage at the Geneva Open brought his match against Yannick Hanfmann to a halt.

Murray, the world No75, was trailing 7-5, 4-1 against Hanfmann, ranked ten

places lower, when gusts of wind sending showers of white pollen from trees on to the court forced the umpire, Greg Allensworth, to suspend play.

The winner of the match is due to face Novak Djokovic in the second round, but Murray was clearly struggling for form a week before the second grand-slam tournament of the season begins at Roland Garros. He became frustrated with the white matter that

was blowing from the adjacent Parc des Eaux-Vives, complaining to the umpire: “It’s like it’s snowing out here.”

Hanfmann, the 32-year-old German, was less keen to leave the court as he broke Murray’s serve twice in the second set. Unless he can stage a spectacular recovery when play resumes, Murray, right, will be going to Paris on a disappointing run, having been beaten in the second round of a second-tier



Challenger event in Bordeaux last week by Grégoire Barrère, the world No108.

Rafael Nadal is one player already in Paris as the 14-times French Open champion practised on Court Philippe-Chatrier yesterday. Nadal’s participation in what could be his final French Open remains uncertain as he continues his attempts to build match fitness after missing almost all of the 2023 season with a hip injury.

Nottingham

Rob Wright

2.10 Felicity	4.10 Super Superjack
2.40 Native Warrior	4.40 Xiomara
2.10 Mutauid	5.10 Leicester Square
3.40 Great Chieftan (nap)	5.45 Givathwilr

Going: good, good to soft in places

Draw: 5f-6f, high numbers best

Racing TV

2.10 Maiden Stakes (£3,780: 5f) (7 runners)

1	(1) 6-5 BATHMAN 24 G Tully 3-8	C Beasley
2	(4) 0-3 DURAN 10 N Tinker 3-8	R Scott
3	(6) 2-4 FAHRENHEIT SEVEN 16 M Usher 3-8	T Heard (3)
4	(5) 0-2-2 GENERAL ASSEMBLY 34 G Boughey 3-8	W Buick
5	(7) 6 MIDNIGHT MISSILE 11 M Appleby 3-8	A Rawlinson
6	(2) 35-5 SILKY ROBINS 15 P Midgley 3-8	D Nolan
7	(3) FELICITY 24 H Evans 3-9	J Doyle

7-4 General Assembly, 2-1 Felicity, 4-1 Fahrenheit Seven, 10-1 Silky Robin, Duran, 5f-1 Bathman, 33-1 Midgley, 3-8 Felicity.

Rob Wright’s choice: Felicity, a well-bred daughter of Blue Point, cost £350,000 last year. Danger: Fahrenheit Seven

2.40 Maiden Stakes (Div I: £3,780: 1m) (9)

1	(8) 4-3 MOAB 126 Miss H Knight 4-10	C Fallon
2	(9) 0-2 TERRIES ROYALE 17 M Appleby 4-10	A Rawlinson
3	(7) 0 AMISERDA 49 H Evans 4-11	W Cox
4	(5) FAR LAKE 19 H Evans 3-9	T Marquand
5	(6) FIELD OF PLENTY 5 Woods 3-9	R Havlin
6	(10) 0-0 LONE PIPER 24 Tom Clover 3-9	N Calkin
7	(3) 32-4 NATIVE WARRIOR 45 R Burke 3-9	J Doyle
8	(5) 5 FAYOA 20 K P De Fay 3-13	J Crowley
9	(6) HECKMONDVIEW 188 Harry Eustace 3-8	K Shoemaker

8-13 Native Warrior, 4-1 Far Lake, 6-1 Fayoa, 10-1 Field Of Plenty, 14-1 Moab, 33-1 Terries Royal, 50-1 Amerda, 6-1 Lone Piper, 100-1 Heckmondview.

Wright choice: Native Warrior was found to be subsequent to 2,000 Guinness winner Notable Speech. Danger: Far Lake, Fayoa

3.10 Maiden Stakes (Div II: £3,780: 1m) (9)

1	(5) DESIDERATA 126 R Potter 4-10	G Wood
2	(10) 0-0 THE FLYING FALCO 49 H Evans 4-12	F Larson (3)
3	(2) 0-0 DEVIOUS DEVIAN 23 W Muir & Grassick 3-9	L Edmunds
4	(1) MUTAUID 21 T Gosden 3-9	J Crowley
5	(9) 20-0 REDHOT WHISPER 11 (H,B,F) B Brookhouse 3-9	J Gilligan
6	(4) 3 ROCK ARMOUR 31 Butler 3-9	L Morris
7	(8) ZOFFADINA 19 M Tinkler 3-9	T Marquand
8	33-22 BATTLE QUEEN 23 R Beckett 3-9	O Murphy
9	(6) TIANITA (T) L Wadhwa 3-8	D Muscott

7-4 Battle Queen, 2-1 Mutauid, 3-1 Redhot Whisper, 6-1 Zoffadina, 25-1 Rock Armour, 33-1 Devious Devian, 50-1 Tianita, 100-1 Desiderata, The Flying Falcon.

Wright choice: Mutauid, a brother to the top-class Mostahdaf, appeals. Danger: Redhot Whisper, Battle Queen

3.40 Handicap (£3,400: 5f) (11) (M)

1	(10) 64-55 ASIMOV 25 (T) J Fanshawe 3-9	D Muscott
2	(6) 5-23 BEAUTY GENERATION 17 (D) M Batti 3-9	N Calkin
3	52-46 CHARMING WHISPER 209 P McBride 9-7	A Farragher
4	(7) 631 WORRALS 17 (D) R Beckett 9-7	H Crouch
5	(6) 32-43 YAAJOOZ 28 (T) G Boughey 9-7	W Buick
6	(2) 500-5 LIVEANDLETIVE 39 W Muir & C Grassick 9-6	L Edmunds
7	(1) 33-02 PHOENIX DUCHESS 10 H Eustace 9-4	Kaiva Fraser
8	(4) 5-36-6 GREAT CHIEFTAN 28 (P) P & Cole 9-4	T Marquand
9	(5) 3-404 ELEVAT 24 C Johnston 9-7	J Doyle
10	(11) 0-24 ALSTRETT 116 A Bailing 9-7	O Murphy
11	(0-0) 24-01 TACTICAL CONTROL 10 (V) B Brookhouse 9-13	J Gilligan

4-1 Warriors, 5-1 Yajooz, 6-1 Alvesta, 7-1 Phoenix Duchess, 8-1 Charming Whisper, Great Chieftan, 10-1 Beauty Generation, Elevat.

Wright choice: Great Chieftan has been gelded since a promising fifth at Epsom. Danger: Worrals, Phoenix Duchess

4.10 Handicap (£5,496: 2m) (7)

1	(5) 10-66 SEAL OF SOLOMON 28 (V) E Dunlop 5-10	N Calkin
2	(2) 22-66 SUPER SUPERJACK 654 (B,F) Dunlop 7-10	W Buick
3	(1) 1-550 SARSONS RISK 53 (P,D) B Brookhouse 5-9	J Gilligan
4	(7) 23-25 TENERIFE SUNSHINE 23 (P) C Johnston 4-9	J Doyle
5	(6) 31-4 TROOPER BISDEE 263 (B,F) Sir M Prescott 4-11	L Morris
6	(3) 242-4 FOX VISION 18 R Varian 4-8	O Murphy
7	(2) 136-5 VALLEY OF FLOWERS 186 (H,D) J Coward 6-9	Joanna Mason

5-2 Super Superjack, 11-4 Trooper Bisdee, 15-1 Valley Of Flowers, 6-1 Tenerife Sunshines, 8-1 Sarson, 10-1 Fox Vision, 12-1 Seal Of Solomon.

Wright choice: Super Superjack usually takes better company; he can defy an absence. Danger: Trooper Bisdee

4.40 Handicap (£4,187: 1m) (10)

1	(10) 4415- RAIMUNDA 289 & Kibler 4-10	J Crowley
2	(4) 41-55 ELLADONIMA 21 (H,B,F) J Fanshawe 4-10	W Buick

3	(5) 4015- INVISIBLE FRIEND 241 (D) K Ryan 5-10	R Scott
4	(9) 60-15 ARDBACCAN 15 (P,L,C) M Appleby 5-9	F Larson (3)
5	(8) 450-0 GEMTLE WHINNY 22 (V) Coakley 4-9	G Bass (3)
6	(7) 0-5-5 YIDMARIA 47 D Menzies 3-10	K Skrydom
7	(2) 10-0-0 TOXIC 38 R Spencer 3-9	K Shoemaker
8	(1) U421 REYAADAH STAR 20 C Johnston 3-8	J Doyle
9	(3) 065-3 CARPATHIAN 13 (H) J Ferguson 3-8	O Murphy
10	(6) 440 LADY BANCROFT 22 (B) R Beckett 3-8	C Hardie

3-1 Reyadah Star, 4-1 Eldonada, 6-1 Raimunda, 13-2 Invisible Friend, 10-1 Xiomara, Lady Bancroft, Carpathian, 12-1 Toxic, Ardbaccan, 16-1 Gemtle Whinny.

Wright choice: Xiomara should relish this step up in trip on her handicap debut. Danger: Carpathian, Raimunda

5.10 Novice Stakes (£3,780: 1m 2f) (12)

1	(7) 4 LESSICO 70 L Williamson 4-10	C Hardie
2	(5) THE GLEN ROVERS 1189 J Wadhwa 5-10	D Muscott
3	(2) FRENCH MISTRESS (H) P De Fay 4-9	B Sayette
4	(12) 1 LAS RAMBLAS 107 R Varian 3-9	J Doyle
5	(4) 1 NIGATA 19 (D) S & E Cristof 3-9	W Buick
6	(6) LEICESTER SQUARE A Bailing 3-9	O Murphy
7	(10) 5 MORE THUNDER 22 Sir M Stoute 3-9	S Osborne
8	(9) NOGRADI R Ryan 3-9	N Calkin
9	(3) 0 SAJI 48 J T Gosden 3-9	J Crowley
10	(11) SYDNEY SEABREEZE 5 Woods 3-9	R Havlin
11	(8) 0-0 ANGLEPOUSE 15 R Beckett 3-11	H Crouch
12	(5) 5 IMPACABLE 182 K King 3-11	C Fallon

5-2 Nigata, 4-1 Las Ramblas, 6-1 Leicester Square, 7-1 Anglepouse, 6-1 More Thunder, 10-1 Saji, 12-1 Nogradi, 14-1 The Glen Rovers.

Wright choice: Leicester Square, whose dam was a group one winner, is interesting. Danger: Impacable, French Mistress

5.45 Handicap £3-Y-O: £3,402: 1m 2f) (12)

1	(1) 36210 ECCENTRIC 34 J Osborne 9-11	S Osborne
2	(7) 2466 MASONBROOK MEADOW 15 Seamus Mullins 9-10	G Downing
3	(11) 6005 RECONSTRATE 26 F Dunlop 9-9	R Havlin
4	(8) 000-0 BACKBANDLOOK 21 (B,H) W Knight 9-9	C Fallon
5	(6) 6-06 WAINABEAWALLABY 12 D Cunha 9-9	C Hutchinson (3)
6	(10) 000- PENALTY SHOOTOUT 223 B Millman 9-8	O Murphy
7	(4) 00-06 EMERALD CITY 28 J Fanshawe 9-8	R Coakley
8	(2) 605- GIVING LEAD 152 (H) B Brookhouse 9-7	J Gilligan
9	(10) 600 DARTAWHLR 25 O Greenall & Guerrieri 9-8	H Russell
10	(9) 000-0 JANE RIBAUDT 21 D Menzies 9-4	K Skrydom
11	(11) 6350 PATROAGE 15 (P) W Tinkler 9-9	R Scott
12	(12) 0-00 MONVEYR 19 M Dods 5-1	C Beasley

5-2 Patroage, 11-2 Givathwilr, 12-1 Penalty Shootout, 8-1 Masonbrook Meadow, 10-1 Wainabewallaby, Eccentric, 12-1 others.

Wright choice: Givathwilr is bred to be useful; he will appreciate this test. Danger: Eccentric, Emerald City

Brighton

Rob Wright

2.20 Mm Mable	3.50 Sailing On
2.20 Cogsworth	4.20 Masterofgeygoose
3.20 Hitched	4.55 Mudhahim

Going: good to firm, good in places

Draw: 5f-1m, low numbers best

Sky Sports Racing

2.20 Handicap (£2,983: 5f) (8)

1	(1) 62261 JACQUELINE 15 (D) P McEntee 5-10	Josephine Gordon
2	(9) 5-350 SUANNI 41 (B,D) Darryll Holland 5-9	J F Egan
3	(6) 346-2 STREET PARADE 12 (P,D) M Attwater 8-9	W Carson
4	(3) 200-0 DARCYS ROCK 158 (T) G Carter 10-5	N Currie
5	(4) 045331 MM MABLE 12 (D) M Attwater 6-9	P Bradley
6	(2) 42-42 ANGLESEY LAD 15 (B) D Loughnane 3-9	Rossa Ryan
7	(5) 30434 ARZAAK 85 (P,C) W Wallis 10-9	H Doyle
8	(8) 000-6 GLAMOROUS JOY 24 (C) Mison 3-8	Mia Nicholls (5)
9	4 Jaquellina, 7-2 Mable, 1-1 Street Parade, Anglesey Lad, 12-1 Suanni, Arzak, 20-1 Glamorous Joy, 25-1 Darcys Rock.	

2.50 Handicap £3-Y-O: £2,983: 7f) (12)

1	(9) 00421 COGSWORTH 19 (D) C Dwyer 9-9	S De Sousa
2	(2) 005-3 KRYSDANJORD 26 Darryll Holland 9-8	J F Egan
3	(1) 6-000 TAKE CARE 34 P G Murphy 10-2	C Bishop
4	(7) 045-0 BATTLEOFBALTIMORE 52 (B,T) D Cunha 9-8	R Clutterbuck
5	(11) 250-6 EDERGOLF’S GIFT 104 C Allen 9-8	D Keenan
6	(6) 00650 IRRELEVANT 34 (B,D) L Carter 9-6	F Marsh
7	(8) 0060- NO SINNER 168 W G Turner 9-5	W Carson
8	(10) 466 DANCING THE DREAM 13 J Channon 9-4	C Bennett
9	(4) 000-0 ANOTHER JACK 46 (K) Jewell 8-10	G Rooke
10	(4) 00-00 PRISCILLA’S JOY 21 P McBride 8-10	J Doughty (7)
11	(12) 000- RED CLOUD 218 G & J Moore 8-10	C Shepherd
12	138 Cogsworth, 9-2 Krysdanjord, 6-1 Dancing The Dream, 10-1 Irrelevant, Battleofbaltimore, 14-1 Another Jack, Take Care, 16-1 Red Cloud.	

3.30 (5f), Cuban Storm (C Beasley, 7-2) (f-tav):

2, Glory Hyde (7-2) (f-tav); 3, Pinpoint (6-1), 3r, Shoabowed (10-1), 9, ran. NR: Lady Of The Garr. 1/4, sh hd. M Dods.

4.00 (7f 219yd), 1, Ron O (Hart 13-2), 2, Arctic Mountain (8-1), 3, Leadenhall (22-1), 10, ran. NR: Trip To Rome. 1/4, 1/4, K Crags.

4.30 (7f 1), Evelyn’s Phoenix (D Allan, 28-1), 2, Mamtha (14-1), 3, Teddy Brown (7-2), 12, ran. Nk, sh hd. T Desterby.

5.00 (7f 1), George Woolster (D Allan, 6-1), 2, Kode Secret (9-1), 3, Loose Tongue (9-1), 10, ran. NR: What Times Tea. 1/4, nk. T Desterby.

5.30 (1m 5f 218yd), 1, The Crafty Mole (M Winn, Evens fav), 2, Believanduncan (7-2), 3, Little Vene (10-1), 7, ran. NR: Succeed. 11, 11, D O’Meara.

Placepot: £76.60.

Quaddot: £24.90.

3.20 Handicap (£2,983: 7f) (9)

1	(5) 50161 UNCLE DICK 20 (P,C) E Houghton 6-9	C Bishop
2	(3) 40300 IMPEACH 12 (P) M Attwater 6-9	P Bradley
3	(7) 1452 OTAGO 20 (C,D) J Boyle 7-9	C Bennett
4	(8) 30241 DION BAKER 22 (P,D) M Whigham 5-9	D Keenan
5	(6) 11000 RABINAL 19 (S) Dow 5-7	H Doyle
6	(1) 1341- HITCHED 213 (H) G & J Moore 5-9	C Shepherd
7	(2) 3055- MARVEL 213 (H) G & J Moore 5-9	S W Kelly
8	(4) 21-84 WE DID THE DIP 20 (B,F) C J Doyle 4-9	P Cosgrave
9	(9) 6000- DIAMOND COTTAGE 239 (H,C) M Saunders 7-8	W Carson

2-1 Uncle Dick, 3-1 Ottago, 6-1 Hitched, Bay The Dip, 13-2 Dion Baker, 12-1 Rabinal, 11-1 Impeach, 33-1 Waseley, 66-1 Diamond Cottage.

3.50 Handicap (£4,606: 1m 4f) (10)

1	(9) 223-3 SAILING ON 23 E Houghton 4-10	C Bishop
2	(7) 06-00 ABSOLUTE CURE 66 G Boughey 4-9	B Loughnane
3	(6) 0306- ATALANTA BREEZE 296 (D) M Tregoning 9-8	H Doyle
4	(4) 3234- ON THE NIGHT TRACK 18 (D) M Usher 7-9	D Costello
5	(2) 240-0 GALLIMUS 15 (P,C) J Gallagher 4-9	R Clutterbuck
6	(2) 240-0 SEMSER 20 (P,D) G & J Moore 7-9	J Watson
7	(5) 143-0 MREMOB 8 (P,D) J Partman 5-9	Olivia Tubb
8	(8) 0554-0 FASCINATING LIPS 36 G & J Moore 7-9	S W Kelly
9	(10) 22-46 BE FAIR 19 (D) A Irvine 8-8	A Keeley (3)
10	(3) 06-00 HURTLER 15 (P,C) P & Cole 4-8	S De Sousa

Evans Sailing On, 4-1 On The Right Track, 7-1 Hurtle, 14-1 Mremob, Gallimus, Semser, Fascinating Lips, 16-1 others.

4.20 Novice Stakes (£4,320: 1m) (9)

1	(7) 32 THANKS DAD 26 S Dixon 4-10	P Dennis
2	(4) 32 PERFECTLY TIMED 108 (D) A Walton 3-11	H Doyle
3	(6) MRS MASEL J Berry 5-9	J F Egan
4	(1) BARTUS BELLATOR D Cunha 3-9	R Clutterbuck
5	(2) 2-04-1 DRINK DRY 88 M Betti 3-9	Rossa Ryan
6	(8) 550 FORTNUM 15 G Boughey 3-9	B Loughnane
7	(5) 4 MASTEROFGEYGOOSE 26 J Parr 3-9	D Hogan
8	(9) 2 TRAMELL C Allen 3-9	D Keenan
9	(3) 2-46 STOP RIDER 120 P & C Cole 3-8	S De Sousa

3-1 Drink Dry, 7-2 Perfectly Timed, 4-1 Thanks Dad, 1-1 Masterofgeygoose, 11-2 Stop Rider, 10-1 Bartus Bellator, 20-1 Fortnum, 25-1 Trameell, 33-1 Mrs Maseel.

4.55 Handicap (£2,983: 1m) (11)

1	(3) 5000- DOLORES ABERNATHY 32 (B) D Loughnane 4-9	Rossa Ryan
2	(4) 44442 MUDLAHHIM 12 S Dixon 8-9	P Dennis
3	(5) 240-0 LA RAY 60 (D) Carter 10-5	D Keenan
4	(2) 00065 RIVAS ROB ROY 21 (B,F,C) J Gallagher 9-5	B Loughnane
5	(8) 111-00 BUHBEZI 15 (V) P Channing 6-9	L Keniry
6	(7) 0010- ON THE NOSE 19 (D) A West 5-9	T Whelan
7	(8) 00532 ARLO’S SUNSHINE 21 (D) Long 7-9	G Rooke
8	(9) 33-30 KENSTONE 110 (P,D) A Winfield 11-9	J Doughty (7)
9	(10) 0235- KALAMA SUNRISE 190 J Channon 4-9	E Greathart
10	(4) 00485 RED HOT ROSE 19 (D) Jack Jones 4-9	S De Sousa
11	7-2 Mudhahim, 4-1 Rivas Rob Roy, 5-1 Arlo’s Sunshine, 7-1 On The Nose, 9-1 Kalama Sunrise, 10-1 Red Hot Rose, 12-1 Kenstone, Buhbezi.	

Hexham

Rob Wright

5.25 Kiss My Face	7.28 West Lash
5.58 Dakota Beat	7.58 Reforme (nb)
6.28 Breizh River	8.28 Well Educated
6.58 Warriors Storm	9.00 Wotuyodunnob Buddy

Going: good, good to soft in places

Sky Sports Racing

5.25 Handicap Hurdle (Div I: £4,779: 2m 7f) (10)

1	(7) 3-2 DIDNT ASK 10 (D) M Barnes 7-10	C Rabibitt
2	28-5 Kiss My Face 10 (D) R Ellison 7-10	P Wadge
3	601-2 BETTER BE DEFINITE 17 (B) N Alexander 6-11	S Lynn (3)
4	6435- REAGROVE LORD 68 (T) G Bewley 6-11	E Austin
5	406-0 BOLT MAN 31 Duncan 10-9	J Williamson
6	6260- JUST CALL ME AL 28 G Boanas 11-10	C Maggs (5)
7	0066- DEQUALL 27 (B,C) W Coltherd 10-10	P Kavanagh
8	2040- BUTO LAD 11 (V,D) M Hammond 7-10	A Stevens
9	10 P/PPE- SHOGHALL’S BOY 46 (C) H Graham & G Rutherford 8-10	Charlotte Jones

2-1 Better Be Definite, 7-2 Kiss My Face, 5-1 Didnt Ask, 10-1 Dequall, 12-1 Reagrove Lord, Buto, Just Call Me, 14-1 Just Call Me Al.

5.58 Handicap Hurdle (Div II: £4,779: 2m 7f) (9)

1	14-4 DILLICHIE 17 (P) J F Foster 7-10	T Midgley
2	5425- BALKOTIC 109 (T,V,C) M Hammond 8-11	Emma Smith-Chaston

Sport Cricket

Yorkshire must go private to survive, club tells members

Mike Atherton

Chief Cricket Correspondent



Yorkshire's members have been told that demutualisation — in essence converting the club from a community interest mutual society to a private company — is "essential" to secure its financial future.

Colin Graves, who returned for a second stint as chairman of the county cricket club in February, wrote to the members yesterday with an update on the club's financial position warning that "without swift and decisive action" Yorkshire will be "fighting for its survival" during 2024. That action may include asking the membership to consider a fundamental reorganisation of the club's governance in future.

In the letter, Graves wrote: "As discussed at our AGM in April, the club's current status as a mutual society continues to prove a blocker to attracting private financing. A demutualisation — thereby converting the club to a private structure, which unlocks potential private investment — appears at this point essential for the club's future."

Such a fundamental reconstitution could only be voted through by the members. At present, about 6,000 members have voting rights at Headingley, and any move to demutualise would need at least 50 per cent of the members to vote, with 75 per cent of that number required to accede to the

conversion. Graves, who bailed out Yorkshire in 2002, won 88 per cent of votes cast when brought back as chairman three months ago. In the run-up to his election Graves had told the membership there were no plans to demutualise but that "in the changing and challenging arena of both UK and world sport, nothing can be ruled out in future". The issue was subsequently raised at the club's general meeting in April.

Any such move is bound to prompt questions, given Yorkshire's historic status and standing as the most successful and influential county club in the land and given the nervousness among county members more generally around the changing nature of the game. Private investment is also likely to come soon to English cricket via the Hundred, although talks have stalled between the host and non-host counties.

Graves has tried to allay these fears by insisting in the letter that: "My firm intention is that members' current rights are protected and that a demutualisation would represent no change to their current interaction with YCCC [Yorkshire County Cricket Club]."

"The club would be better structured to be self-sustaining, still in existence, and to capture maximum value for YCCC from any processes such as the Hundred."

Demutualisation would mean converting existing debt to equity. In February's oral evidence to the culture, media and sport select committee, Graves said that he and the deputy chairman, Phillip Hodson, had committed seven-figure sums since returning to the club, and Yorkshire still owe the Graves

family trust more than £15 million. Graves has given assurances in the letter that this would not result in any profit to him.

"I would like to state on record that in the (perhaps unlikely) event that any financial upside emerged from ongoing refinancing efforts for either myself or my family trust, these amounts would be donated in full into a charitable trust supporting Yorkshire recreational cricket, both men's and women's," he wrote.

Yorkshire's financial situation remains challenging. The club recorded a trading loss of £2.7 million in 2023, despite hosting a lucrative Ashes Test. Cumulative losses, largely related to legal costs and settlements as a consequence of the sacking of a high number of staff in the wake of the racism storm that engulfed the club, amounted to more than £5 million from 2021 to 2023. Long-term borrowings total more than £20 million and short-term creditors are owed more than £5 million.

The club secured £4 million of funding in the first quarter of this year, but must now find £5 million to repay creditors as a matter of urgency, through targeting new sources of finance and cutting costs. Graves wrote that Yorkshire expect to make a further loss in 2024 and face having no men's Test match in 2027 and 2028.

At present, 15 of the 18 first-class counties are organised as community interest mutual societies. Durham, Hampshire and Northamptonshire are the exceptions, with Northants the last of those to change status to a limited company in September 2016, when members elected to do so by 172 votes to 27 at an extraordinary general meeting. That level of engagement reflects the general decline in the number of members across the professional game, now totalling fewer than 70,000.



Critchley, who finished unbeaten on 99 in his 100th first-class match, celebrates

Essex's win for the ages

Essex v Warwickshire

Chelmsford (final day of four):
Essex (18pts) beat Warwickshire (6)
by four wickets

Geoffrey Dean

From the jaws of defeat, after conceding a first-innings deficit of 235, Essex snatched one of their greatest victories in front of several hundred jubilant members. Thanks to an outstanding

185-ball fourth-innings hundred by Jordan Cox, his second for his adopted county, and a no less accomplished unbeaten 99 in his 100th first-class match by Matt Critchley, Essex successfully chased down a target of 330 after the pair had come together late on the third afternoon at 112 for four.

When play resumed on the final morning, the game was in the balance with Essex needing another 106 with six wickets in hand. Although Warwickshire took the second new ball six overs into the day, it refused to swing and offered no seam movement. With two inexperienced young spinners, the visiting side could not ask the same questions that Essex had posed when skittling Warwickshire for 94 in their second innings.

WHO'S NOT ON THE PLANE?

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with Harmer after Essex overturned a first-innings deficit of 235 to win

In desperation, Alex Davies, the Warwickshire captain, settled on a short-ball barrage from his three pace bowlers with a 6-3 leg-side field, and three men back for the top edge. The ploy did not work. Although Cox clipped a leg stump half-volley from the debutant Barbadian seamer Che Simmons straight to deep square leg to end his memorable fifth-wicket alliance of 176 in 54 overs with Critchley, only 42 more were needed and a famous victory within sight.

Michael Pepper soon chopped the debutant New Zealander Michael Rae on to his stumps after giving him the charge but Harmer joined Critchley to seal the win with a seventh-wicket stand of 38 in 33 balls. The South African pulled effectively, hitting the

winning boundary down to fine leg with the shot.

"Harmy was trying to get me on strike but put it in the gap," Critchley, who finished one short of his century, said. "The win is amazingly special and a lot better than getting a hundred, although it was my best four-day innings under that pressure. As a group we really do think we can win from any situation, even when I joined Coxy at Il2 for four. He has been fantastic since he came to the club."

Davies admitted his side had been "criminal" in losing from such a position of strength: "As a top order we need to look hard at ourselves. We've lost the game in the third innings and are hurting right now but I can't fault the bowlers, who've run in hard on a soft pitch."

Lyon and Balderson thwart Durham's unlikely victory bid

Lancashire v Durham

Blackpool (final day of four): Lancashire (22pts) beat Durham (3) by 60 runs

Paul Edwards

The majority of the spectators at Stanley Park on Monday turned up in the hope of seeing Lancashire win their first County Championship match of the season. They will, therefore, have gone home chuffed but also enriched having watched a magnificent day's cricket in which Durham failed by 60 runs to chase down 475.

Lancashire's victory was in glorious doubt when David Bedingham and Ollie Robinson were in — they put on 216 for the fourth wicket, a partnership that took their side to within 162 runs of what would have been a county record for a successful fourth-innings run chase.

However, Nathan Lyon, who held Lancashire's attack together when bullets were flying, had Bedingham caught by the wicketkeeper, Matthew Hurst, for 103, and then Ben Stokes completed a low-key match with the bat when he

attempted to reverse-sweep a full-length ball from the leg spinner Luke Wells and was bowled for 18.

That dismissal plainly set back Durham's pursuit but it nothing like decided this wonderful game's outcome. It was only when George Balderson took the new ball that the visiting side's hopes crumbled.

Bowling with good pace and niggling away on off stick, Balderson dismissed Graham Clark and Paul Coughlin in the space of three deliveries and then sprinted forward to take a tumbling return catch off Ben Raine's bat and pad. Matthew Potts was then run out for two and Callum Parkinson was caught at slip by Keaton Jennings off Balderson, to leave the seamer with figures of four for 52 and Robinson stranded at the other end, with a career-best 171 not out his only consolation.

"George Balderson makes things happen," Dale Benkenstein, Lancashire's head coach, said. "It's not just his skills but his character, he's a great cricketer. He's very quiet but incredibly determined and has a really intelligent cricket brain."

"There were no guarantees when he came on but he just made it happen

with that second new ball. We've got a lot of young players in the team and for them be part of this win after what we've been through is a huge step in their careers."

But as the Lancashire players relaxed with a beer on the outfield after the game, it was useful to recall that the portents were not entirely promising for them at the start of the day. This is a quick-scoring outground on which bowlers who stray in length or line receive appropriate punishment, something that was handed out with evident enthusiasm by Bedingham and Robinson on Monday morning.

The fourth-wicket pair scored 150 runs off 30 overs in a session that contained only one maiden. Having begun the season with five successive fifties, Robinson reached his first century with a sweep off Lyon in the over before lunch. Shortly after the resumption, Bedingham copied Jennings by making his second century of the game and this match thus became only the tenth in County Championship history in which two players on different sides have each scored two hundreds. That, however, is not why the faithful at Blackpool will remember it.

Curran: Early return from IPL is key

T20 World Cup

Simon Wilde

Determined not to repeat the mistakes of last year's 50-over World Cup, when by their own admission they underestimated the task at hand, England's white-ball players have assembled in good time for the series against Pakistan, which starts at Headingley on Wednesday and serves as preparation for the T20 World Cup in the Caribbean and the US beginning on June 1.

The early departure of eight players from the IPL last week apparently caused disquiet among their franchisees — no other country conducted such a wholesale exfiltration of its World Cup men — but Jos Buttler, Matthew Mott and Robert Key, those calling the shots, cannot afford a second damp squib of a world-title defence.

The players may have arrived in

Leeds, but on their second full day they were still awaiting their Australian head coach as Mott was delayed at home by a family matter. A potential further complication is that Buttler, the captain, is poised to leave the squad at any time when his wife Louise goes into labour with their third child. If Buttler is absent, Moeen Ali will lead the side and Ben Duckett, the spare batsman, will probably be drafted into the starting XI.

These distractions aside, the mood in the camp seems buoyant. The players gathered on Sunday for Jonny Bairstow's customary home barbecue and Sam Curran said: "It seems like we're back to our energy and the boys are really fizzed about this [T20 World Cup] trophy hopefully coming back." Their spirits were no doubt further lifted by the sight of Jofra Archer bowling in the nets for more than half an hour across two spells, apparently untroubled by

his elbow issues, which it is hoped have been cured. He is set to play two of the first three matches against Pakistan and all being well will be on the plane to Barbados on Friday next week.

On the summons to return early from the IPL, Curran added: "Jos and the coaching staff wanted to get the group back together, and we probably didn't have that last time [for the 50-over World Cup]. I think this will be really good [for] role clarity, guys' positions, getting used to different types of training and Jos's captaincy again. We've been apart for a while so these games are going to be crucial."

England's itinerary

First T20 v Pakistan Headingley, tomorrow
Second T20 v Pakistan Edgbaston, May 25
Third T20 v Pakistan Cardiff, May 28
Fourth T20 v Pakistan the Oval, May 30
T20 World Cup opener v Scotland Bridgetown, June 4

Scoreboards

Division One: Essex v Warwickshire

Chelmsford (final day of four): Essex (18pts) beat Warwickshire (6) by four wickets

Warwickshire First Innings 397 (E G Barnard 165, M G K Burgess 108)

Second Innings 94 (M J J Critchley 4 for 24)

Essex First Innings 162

Second Innings (overnight 224-4)

J M Cox c Bethell b Simmons 112
M J J Critchley not out 99
M S Pepper b Rae 1
S R Harmer not out 14
Extras (lb 2, w 7, nb 10) 19
Total (6 wks, 97.2 overs) 331

Fall of wickets 1-0, 2-12, 3-65, 4-112, 5-288, 6-293.

Bowling Hannon-Dalby 15-4-27-0; Rae 20-1-86-3; Yates 26-4-90-0; Simmons 12-2-59-2; Barnard 13-2-31-1; Bethell 7-1-28-0; Mousley 3-1-8-0.

Umpires J D Middlebrook and B J Debenham.

Lancashire v Durham

Blackpool (final day of four): Lancashire (22pts) beat Durham (3) by 60 runs

Lancashire First Innings 357 (K Jennings 115)

Second Innings 353-9 dec (K Jennings 155; B A Stokes 5 for 98)

Durham First Innings 236 (D G Bedingham 101; T H Aspinwall 5 for 41, N M Lyon 4 for 59)

Second Innings (overnight 134-3)

D G Bedingham c Hurst b Lyon 103
T O Robinson not out 171
B A Stokes b Wells 18
G Clark c Hurst b Balderson 14
P Coughlin c Jennings b Balderson 6
B A Raine c and b Balderson 3
M J Potts run out 2
C F Parkinson c Jennings b Balderson 0
Extras (lb 9, lb 4, w 1, nb 10) 24
Total (93 overs) 414

Fall of wickets 1-83, 2-85, 3-97, 4-313, 5-350, 6-380, 7-380, 8-384, 9-388.

Bowling Mahmood 11-2-59-0; Williams 10-1-50-0; Lyon 32-3-95-2; Balderson 13-1-52-4; Aspinwall 15-0-87-2; Wells 12-0-58-1.

Umpires R K Illingworth and R J Bailey.

Nottinghamshire v Hampshire

Trent Bridge (final day of four): Hampshire (20pts) beat Nottinghamshire (3) by five wickets

Nottinghamshire First Innings 235 (L W James 106 not out, M Abbas 4 for 49)

Second Innings 209 (J A Haynes 59; J M Clarke 57)

Hampshire First Innings 276 (L A Dawson 95, K H D Barker 74; O P Stone 4 for 62)

Second Innings (overnight 84-5)

F S Middleton not out 59
J K Fuller not out 77
Extras (lb 7, w 5, nb 4) 16
Total (5 wks, 51 overs) 171

Fall of wickets 1-9, 2-15, 3-32, 4-41, 5-44.

Bowling Stone 9-2-32-0; Pennington 14-3-37-2; Paterson 15-4-31-2; James 6-2-23-1; Harrison 7-0-41-0.

Umpires S J O'Shaughnessy and N J Llong.

Somerset v Kent

Taunton (final day of four): Somerset (24pts) beat Kent (2) by eight wickets

Somerset First Innings 554 (T Banton 133, E K Riew 114, L Gregory 77, T A Lammonby 69)

Second Innings

M T Renshaw not out 82
S R Dickson c Finch b Swanepoel 6
T A Lammonby c Crawley b O'Riordan 30
A I Umeed not out 73
Extras (lb 1, nb 2) 3
Total (2 wks, 44 overs) 194

Fall of wickets 1-24, 2-60.

Bowling Stewart 9-1-25-0; Swanepoel 9-1-35-1; O'Riordan 17-0-95-1; Evison 4-0-23-0; Denly 5-1-15-0.

Kent First Innings 178 (J L Denly 61)

Second Innings (following on; overnight 409-5)

J L Denly c Rew b Gregory 67
H Z Finch c Rew b Davey 20
J D M Evison lbw b Davey 17
B Swanepoel c Overton b Pretorius 7
G Stewart b Gregory 37
G A Garrett not out 1
Extras (lb 8, lb 2, nb 28) 38
Total (126 overs) 564

Fall of wickets 1-194, 2-378, 3-384, 4-399, 5-409, 6-455, 7-480, 8-494, 9-553.

Bowling Overton 23-4-87-0; Gregory 19-0-103-2; Leach 31-2-119-2; Pretorius 25-1-110-3; Lammonby 5-0-20-0; Renshaw 10-2-45-1; Umeed 3-0-30-0; Davey 10-1-40-2.

Umpires N A Mallender and R A White.

Finished Sunday: Kia Oval Surrey 213 (D W Lawrence 84, O J P Dope 63) and 427 (J Clark 98, D W Lawrence 87, J L Smith 72, R J Burns 70; V Singh 4 for 103);

Worcestershire 128 (D J Worrall 6 for 22) and 231 (B J Gibbon 75, N G Smith 60; D J Worrall 4 for 35); Surrey (19pts) beat Worcestershire (3) by 281 runs.

Surrey P W L D Bat Bwl Dsd Pts 6 4 0 2 16 18 0 114

Somerset 6 2 0 4 16 16 0 96

Essex 6 3 1 2 12 16 0 92

Notts 6 1 2 3 11 17 0 68

Warks 6 0 2 4 18 15 0 65

Durham 6 1 1 4 8 8 0 64

Hampshire 6 1 1 4 8 8 0 64

Worce 6 0 2 13 16 0 61

Kent 6 1 2 3 5 13 0 58

Lancashire 6 1 3 2 8 13 0 53

Division Two

Derbyshire v Northamptonshire

Derby (final day of four): Derbyshire (12pts) drew with Northamptonshire (13)

Northamptonshire First Innings 422 (R I Keogh 102, G A Bartlett 76, J Broad 75, S Vasconcelos 53)

Second Innings (overnight 195-2)

E N Gay not out 153
K K Nair b Dupavillon 55
G A Bartlett not out 33
Extras (lb 1, lb 5, w 5) 11
Total (3 wks dec, 53 overs) 310

Fall of wickets 1-90, 2-119, 3-243.

Bowling Dupavillon 12-2-60-1; Tickner 9-0-67-0; Dal 6-0-19-0; Lloyd 16-0-92-1; Reece 4-0-16-0; Chappell 6-0-50-1.

Derbyshire First Innings 362 (B D Guest 76, W J Madsen 62, R A Whiteley 54, M J Lamb 52; B W Sanderson 5 for 76)

Second Innings

"D L Lloyd c Broad b Sanderson 15
L M Reece b Keogh 44
E N Gay not out 16
B D Guest c Vasconcelos 16
P Patterson-White 33
W J Madsen c Patterson-White b Keogh 27
M J Lamb lbw b Keogh 16
A H T Donald c Nair b Patterson-White 0
A K Dal not out 31
R A Whiteley c Broad b Keogh 0
Z J Chappell c Bartlett b Patterson-White 72
B M Tickner c Keogh 16
D M Dupavillon not out 0
Extras (lb 5, lb 12, nb 6) 23
Total (9 wks, 83 overs) 261

Fall of wickets 1-16, 2-74, 3-127, 4-132, 5-133, 6-143, 7-149, 8-257, 9-257.

Bowling Sanderson 15-4-43-1; Procter 4-0-15-0; Kaul 6-0-28-0; Finan 7-0-38-0; Patterson-White 29-12-58-3; Keogh 22-8-62-5.

Umpires M Newell and N Pratt.

Glamorgan v Middlesex

Sophia Gardens (final day of four): Middlesex (21pts) beat Glamorgan (2) by two wickets

Glamorgan First Innings 183 (T G Helm 4 for 44)

Second Innings (overnight 294-7)

Z U Hassan c Higgins b Bamber 34
M S Crane lbw b Hollman 48
A W Gorvin c Helm b Hollman 4
J P McIlroy not out 0
Extras (lb 8, lb 3, nb 10) 21
Total (112.2 overs) 372

Fall of wickets 1-35, 2-45, 3-79, 4-235, 5-258, 6-283, 7-293, 8-354, 9-371.

Bowling Bamber 25-6-70-1; Helm 23-4-71-3; Roland-Jones 26-10-59-1; Hollman 14-2-57-3; Higgins 17-2-64-2; Fernandes 7-0-40-0.

Middlesex First Innings 343 (M D Stoneman 129, R F Higgins 75 not out; J A R Harris 4 for 84)

Second Innings

M D Stoneman c Cooke b Gorvin 63
S D Robson b Gorvin 31
M D E Holden b Crane 28
J L du Plooy lbw b Harris 16
R F Higgins c Cooke b Crane 1
N Fernandes c Ingram b Crane 15
T L Davies not out 22
T S Roland-Jones lbw b Crane 0
L B K Hollman c Cooke b Crane 25
T G Helm not out 0
Extras (lb 8, lb 10, nb 4) 23
Total (8 wks, 64 overs) 212

Fall of wickets 1-65, 2-102, 3-113, 4-114, 5-144, 6-158, 7-159, 8-161.

Bowling McIlroy 7-0-31-0; Carlson 5-0-11-0; Gorvin 11-4-23-2; Crane 27-4-99-5; Harris 14-2-31-1.

Umpires P K Baldwin and J Shanrtry.

Leicestershire v Gloucestershire

Leicester (final day of four): Leicestershire (11pts) drew with Gloucestershire (14)

Gloucestershire First Innings 706-6 dec (C T Bancroft 160, B G Charlesworth 126, G S Van Buuren 103, J R Bracey 92, O J Price 72)

Leicestershire First Innings 371 (R K Patel 117, S W Currie 72)

Second Innings (following on; overnight 24-0)

R K Patel c Bracey b Price 51
M S Harris c Bracey b Shaw 17
L K Kimber b Webster 13
P J Hill b Middleton 54
P S P Handscomb st Bracey b Middleton 81
R Ahmed st Bracey b Price 55
T O B Cox c Price b Shaw 18
B W M Mlike not out 37
T A R Scriven not out 25
Extras (lb 14, lb 2, w 6, nb 4) 26
Total (7 wks, 105 overs) 377

Fall of wickets 1-38, 2-67, 3-109, 4-201, 5-277, 6-312, 7-316.

Bowling Taylor 19-5-42-0; Shaw 19-4-56-2; Middleton 24-5-102-2; Webster 10-5-20-1; Van Buuren 2-0-9-0; Price 24-5-103-2; Charlesworth 6-0-21-0; Hammond 1-0-8-0.

Umpires S Shanmugam and C M Watts.

Finished Sunday: Hove Sussex 150 (G C Hill 4 for 22) and 227 (T P Alsop 86); Yorkshire 195 (J E Root 67; S F Hunt 4 for 64) and 161 (A Lyth 73; O E Robinson 4 for 42); Sussex (19pts) beat Yorkshire (3) by 21 runs.

Sussex P W L D Bat Bwl Dsd Pts 6 3 1 2 17 17 2 96

Middlesex 6 2 0 4 11 14 0 89

Leics 6 0 0 6 19 12 0 79

Gloucs 6 1 1 4 15 13 0 76

Northants 6 0 1 5 16 14 0 70

Glamorgan 6 1 1 4 9 12 0 69

Yorkshire 6 0 2 4 13 18 0 63

Derbyshire 6 0 1 5 7 9 1 55

Sport Football

Slot's ability to realise players' potential won Anfield top job

Manager's high-tempo playing style and good injury record made him frontrunner to succeed Klopp, writes **Paul Joyce**

Arne Slot has a flat that is barely furnished opposite Feyenoord's De Kuip stadium, though his family home can be found about an hour and a half to the northeast of Rotterdam, in Zwolle. It is a destination that has been central to much of his life.

He launched his professional career as an attacking midfielder at FC Zwolle before seeing out his playing days at the newly formed PEC Zwolle after the old club went bankrupt. Slot's first steps into coaching would also be taken at the Eredivisie side, initially in the youth academy.

More recently it also provided the setting for his interview with Liverpool over the vacant manager's job, although the 45-year-old would end up asking almost as many questions as the new sporting director, Richard Hughes.

Not that Slot harboured any doubts about wanting to become Jürgen Klopp's successor. Indeed, while Xabi Alonso ruled himself out of the running to stay at Bayer Leverkusen, Slot's enthusiasm to sign up for the challenge of steering one of the biggest clubs in the world was one of the qualities that further endeared him to Anfield power brokers.

Rather, it was a desire for detail that led him to seek out answers about the squad he will inherit and the city that will provide a home from home.

The impression the affable Slot made in that face-to-face meeting spoke to the due diligence Liverpool had already forensically compiled. That analysis, led by the director of research, Will Spearman, with input

from Michael Edwards, the new chief executive of football for Fenway Sports Group, Liverpool's owner, and Hughes, was heavily data driven. The model Liverpool adopted informed them of how players have performed before, during and after Slot's reign at Feyenoord, and also his previous club, AZ Alkmaar, and offered insight into how he harnesses the potential of a squad and improves it.

That is something that appealed greatly given the belief that there is plenty of untapped potential in the pool of talent bequeathed by Klopp, despite the end-of-season drop in performance that resulted in a third-place Premier League finish.

Slot tends to provide a one-on-one presence in the analysis room, and also on the training pitch, and is known to put together his own clips of a player's display rather than rely on club analysts.

In addition, Liverpool also ran a data check on what was expected of Feyenoord relative to their resources in a Dutch league that has traditionally been dominated by PSV Eindhoven and Ajax. The numbers revealed a club outperforming their means, with a title triumph in 2022-23, only the second this century, followed by Dutch Cup success this term. At Alkmaar, he averaged the highest points per game of any coach in the club's history. Feyenoord's record of strong player availability thanks to low injury rates also earned a tick beside his name.

There was an added belief that the transition from Klopp could be straightforward given Slot favours the sort of high-tempo, high-intensity and high-pressing approach that has become ingrained at Liverpool.

With all those elements favourable, background checks were completed. They had started some time before Slot emerged publicly as a leading contender, but the more Liverpool liked about him, the more they kept



Slot's work as Feyenoord coach, above, impressed Liverpool, whose captain Van Dijk once lined up against his compatriot when playing for Groningen, below



digging and the more they were convinced he could be the right fit.

Although the names considered by Hughes and Edwards were considerable, it was never the case of a shortlist being whittled down. The Sporting Lisbon coach, Rúben Amorim, was evaluated and showed up well on the data, but he

never superseded Slot and was not discussed to the same extent. Had Liverpool wanted the Portuguese, there were no barriers. It was simply that Slot was the preferred option.

The process appears to have been robust. Whether Slot proves to be the right choice will be determined by results, though he is set to throw himself into the job. A start date for pre-season has already been brought forward by a week to the beginning of July

for those who are not at the European Championship or Copa América. That tallies with Slot's assistant at Feyenoord, Sipke Hulshoff, resigning from his role as No 2 with the Holland national team to concentrate fully on relocating to Merseyside. For Mohamed Salah, Harvey Elliott and Curtis Jones, among others, that will

'I could not ignore this opportunity'

CONTINUED FROM BACK

time at Feyenoord and before at AZ Alkmaar, was one of the factors that persuaded the club to pursue him as their new head coach. He will start on June 1.

Núñez, 24, scored 18 goals in all competitions this season but ended the campaign as a substitute because of his wayward finishing, which contributed to him losing Klopp's trust and fuelled speculation over his future.

However, the Uruguay striker's power, speed and determination to continue to put himself in scoring positions are viewed as attributes which can be polished to allow him to blossom next season.

Slot helped Santiago Giménez, 23, thrive at Feyenoord. The forward scored 49 goals in 86 games for the Dutch side, who won the Eredivisie title in 2022-23 and the KNVB Cup this season. Slot has been known to try to rebuild the confidence of forwards during analysis sessions by stopping a video "just as he shoots the ball wide" to help his players absorb explanations.

Ibrahima Konaté and Dominik Szoboszlai are among the other first-team players who have room for improvement after also ending the season with their minutes restricted.

"It is certainly not an easy decision to close the door behind you at a club where you have experienced so many wonderful moments and worked successfully with so many wonderful people," Slot told Feyenoord's website.

"But as a sportsman, an opportunity to become a head coach in the Premier League, at one of the biggest clubs in the world, is difficult to ignore."

mean about six weeks off, while the time frame will be considerably shorter for those at major tournaments.

Contract discussions with Virgil van Dijk — who said on Sunday that there was "nothing on the table" — Salah and Trent Alexander-Arnold will proceed as a priority as the trio enter the final year of their existing deals, although there is no suggestion that any of them will leave this summer. Indeed, the centre back, who once lined up for Groningen against PEC Zwolle and Slot, has vowed to be there for "whatever he needs".

"He probably knows already but everyone knows our expectations are always huge and it is about managing that in the right way and getting the maximum out of all our players," Van Dijk said.

And that is precisely why Liverpool have hired Slot.

Results

Cycling

Giro d'Italia
Leading overall positions (after 15th stage): 1. Pogacar (Slovenia), UAE Team Emirates 56hr 11min 42sec; 2. G. Thomas (GB), INEOS Grenadiers; 3. D. Martinez (Col), BORA-hansgrohe; 4. M. Valverde (Spain), Movistar. **Today's 16th stage** (Livigno to Santa Cristina Valgardena, 202km).

Football

Italian Serie A Bologna 3 Juventus 3; Salernitana 1 Hellas Verona 2.
Top of the table
P W D L F A Pts
Inter Milan (C) 37 29 6 2 87 20 93
AC Milan 37 22 8 7 73 46 74
Bologna 37 18 14 5 54 30 68
Juventus 37 18 14 5 52 31 68
Atalanta 36 20 10 6 67 39 66
European Under 17 Championship: Group B Denmark 2 Wales 0.
Under-16 International Poland 3 Wales 0.

Tennis

ATP Gonet Geneva Open
First round A. Shevchenko (Kaz) bt F. Marozsan (Hun) 6-4, 7-6 (7-4); S. Ofner (Austria) bt R. Hijioka (Aus) 4-6, 6-4, 6-3; E. Ruusuvaara (Fin) bt M. Giron (US) 6-3, 6-3; F. Cobolli (It) bt A. Karatsev (Russ) 7-5, 6-1.
ATP Open Parc Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes
Lyon: First round P. Kotov (Russ) bt P. Cachin (Arg) 6-1, 6-4; A. Rinderknech (Fr) bt D. Evans (GB) 6-3, 4-6, 7-6 (8-6); D. Köpfer (Ger) bt J. Barranco Cosano (Sp) 6-4, 6-7 (4-7); 6-4; T. Etcheverry (Arg) bt N. Sánchez Izquierdo (Sp) 1-6, 6-2, 6-2.
WTA Grand Prix De San Atlesse Royale La Princesse Lalla Meryem
Rabat: First round Bai Zhuoxuan (China) bt K. Day (US) 6-3, 7-6 (7-4); N. Podoroska (Arg) bt T. Maria (Ger) 6-2, 6-4; Wang Xiyu (China) bt N. Brancaccio (It) 7-6 (7-5), 7-5; E. Cocciaretto (It) bt Y. Kabballa (Mor) 6-

3, 6-4; C. Osorio (Col) bt E. Avanesyan (Russ) 3-6, 6-4, 4-0 ret; P. Stearns (US) bt A. Krunić (Ser) 5-7, 6-2, 6-1; C. Rossetello (It) bt Yuan Yue (China) 7-6 (9-7), 1-6, 6-4; L. Siegemund (Ger) bt A. Blinkova (Russ) 6-1, 7-6 (7-4).
WTA Internationaux de Strasbourg
First round M. Linette (Pol) bt S. Cirstea (Rom) 7-5, 7-5; Wang Xinyu (China) bt A. Kalinskaya (Russ) 6-4, 7-6 (7-3); L. Samsonova (Russ) bt B. Krjickova (Cz) 6-2, 6-7 (5-7), 6-4; K. Siniakova (Cz) bt V. Putintseva (Kaz) 6-0, 7-5; E. Alexandrova (Russ) bt C. Bucsa (Sp) 6-0, 7-5; E. Svitolina (Ukr) bt D. Parry (Fr) 6-3, 6-4; M. Frech (Pol) bt S. Stephens (US) 6-3, 6-3; F. Ferro (Fr) bt E. Andreescu (Russ) 6-2, 6-2; E. Navarro (US) bt A. Cornet (Fr) 6-4, 6-1.
French Open qualifying
Roland Garros: First round (selected): Men B. Harris (GB) bt E. Nava (US) 6-3, 4-6, 6-1; D. Kudla (US) bt J. Choiński (GB) 6-4, 6-4. Women Wei Sijia (China) bt Y. Miyazaki (GB) 6-1, 6-1.

City dig from wife of Liverpool owner

Martyn Ziegler

The wife of Liverpool's owner has hit back at a mocking message from Manchester City with a dig of her own.

City's social media accounts posted "This Means Four", with four trophy emojis after clinching their fourth consecutive Premier League title — mocking Liverpool's "This Means More" slogan.

Linda Pizzuti Henry, the chief executive of Boston Globe Media who is married to Liverpool's owner John W. Henry, was at Anfield for Jürgen Klopp's final farewell. She responded on Instagram with a message saying:

"Thanks for thinking of us on your special day."

Rivalry between the clubs has grown into some ill feeling, with City's team coach previously targeted by Liverpool supporters. Liverpool are the only club other than City to have won the Premier League in the past seven seasons, having won in 2019-20.

The "This Means More" slogan was launched by Liverpool in 2018 as part of a campaign devised by the creative marketing agency Octagon aimed at "celebrating the bond between the club and its supporters, employees and partners". It has led to criticism and mockery by fans of rival clubs.

Sky Sports's viewing figures for the final day of the season rose by 43 per cent from last term — because of a combination of the title race not having been decided and the farewell to Klopp.

City's 3-1 win over West Ham United averaged 1.27 million viewers and peaked at 1.51 million, Liverpool vs Wolves averaged 901,000 and peaked at 1.07 million, while Chelsea's 2-1 win over Bournemouth averaged 175,000 and peaked at 207,000. The cumulative average was 2.34 million, 43 per cent higher than last season's 1.64 million.

TNT Sports covered Arsenal's 2-1 win over Everton but the broadcaster declined to release viewer numbers.

Villa keen to sign Barkley – and let top earners leave

Charlotte Duncker

Aston Villa are in talks to sign Ross Barkley after the midfielder impressed at Luton Town this season.

Unai Emery is looking to add strength in depth to his squad before the club's first European Cup campaign since they were the defending champions in 1982-83 and the 30-year-old caught the eye after his standout campaign for Rob Edwards's side.

Barkley, who has 33 England caps, was previously at Villa Park on loan from Chelsea four years ago, making 24 league appearances and scoring three goals. He is believed to still have a contract with Luton, who have been relegated to the Sky Bet Championship, having arrived on a free transfer there last summer.

Speaking about his future last month, the former Everton midfielder said: "I want to play in the Premier League. I want to play in Europe again... I feel like for the next three years maybe I'll still be in my prime years."

It is understood that he would be available to Villa for a small fee, which would help the West Midlands club as they look to tread carefully with transfers to ensure they stay within the Premier League's Profitability and Sustainability Rules (PSR).

Their latest accounts, which covered the 2022-23 season, showed that Villa posted a £119.6 million loss, so sales this summer will be key to allow Emery to bring in players to strengthen his squad. A forward, another midfielder and a versatile full back are also on the head coach's wishlist.

The club, who finished fourth in the Premier League this season, will listen to offers for Diego Carlos, who joined the club two years ago for about £26 million and is a high earner on £100,000 a week.

Philippe Coutinho, the former Liverpool and Barcelona attacking midfielder, who spent last season on loan in Qatar at Al-Duhail SC, is also on huge wages and under contract until 2026. The Brazilian, 31, is not part of Emery's plans so is another player for whom the club would be willing to listen to offers.

Jacob Ramsey would generate the most profit for PSR as he is a home-grown player but the club are reluctant to sell him while Clément Lenglet and



Barkley was signed on a free transfer by Luton and they were rewarded with some impressive performances in midfield

Nicolò Zaniolo, who spent last season on loan at Villa, will return to Barcelona and Galatasaray respectively.

While qualifying for the Champions League has given them a windfall of about £50 million, Villa will also benefit

from new kit deals. The club confirmed on Monday that they have a deal with Adidas from next season, which came after they complained to their previous supplier, Castore, about the quality of the kit, with players commenting that it

was becoming too wet. The move to Adidas follows the announcement this month that Betano, the betting company, will become a new sponsor in a deal worth £40 million — a record for the club.

Valencia's No1 is top target in Newcastle's 'keeper search

Martin Hardy

Newcastle United will step up their search for a new goalkeeper, with Valencia's Giorgi Mamardashvili a leading target. The club have repeatedly watched the 23-year-old Georgian and the head coach, Eddie Howe, is a big fan of the 6ft 6in goalkeeper.

Newcastle are keen to recruit a new goalkeeper in the summer who can challenge their first-choice No1, the 32-year-old Nick Pope. They are aware of the spending limitations put on them by the Premier League's Profitability and Sustainability Rules and know that Mamardashvili's price is likely to be about £35 million.

He has impressed this season for Rubén Baraja's side, and has missed only one of Valencia's La Liga games.

Newcastle also hope to finalise the signing of Bournemouth's Lloyd Kelly this week. The 25-year-old defender has informed Bournemouth of his decision to leave as a free agent.

Newcastle conceded 62 goals in the Premier League this season — more than Everton and Fulham, who finished in the bottom half — and Howe is determined to improve defensively next season. His priority is to sign a young goalkeeper to challenge Pope, who returned against Brentford on Sunday after missing 27 games because of a dislocated shoulder. Martin Dubravka, 35, deputised for Pope but there is doubt over his future, with his contract set to run out next season.

Only three La Liga teams conceded more goals than ninth-placed Valencia this campaign and it is thought that Mamardashvili, who moved to Spain in 2021 and was the club's player of the season in 2022-23, is open to the possibility of moving to the Premier League.

The former Liverpool goalkeeper Loris Karius, Newcastle's No3, will also leave now that the campaign has finished. Newcastle have also discussed the possibility of moving for Arsenal's Aaron Ramsdale, 26.

The Newcastle fourth-choice goalkeeper, Mark Gillespie, signed a new one-year contract last month.

It is thought that the club will spend significantly this summer, with players such as Miguel Almirón and Callum Wilson potentially exiting and adding to the budget at Howe's disposal.

No cut-price deal for £85m Gyokeres, English clubs told

Tom Allnutt

Sporting Lisbon will demand that clubs interested in Viktor Gyokeres this summer pay the striker's release clause of €100 million (£85 million) in full. Gyokeres has enjoyed a spectacular first season at Sporting and has attracted interest from several European clubs, including Arsenal and Chelsea.

Sporting are anticipating offers for Gyokeres once they have played Porto in the Portuguese cup final on Sunday, and plan to point clubs to the Swede's hefty release clause, which was inserted into the five-year contract he signed when he left Coventry City for £20 million last year.

Gyokeres is the top scorer in the Portuguese Primeira this season with 29 goals and he has also registered ten as-

sists as Sporting won the league by ten points.

When asked this month about the possibility of staying at Sporting, the 25-year-old said he "couldn't promise anything", particularly given the speculation surrounding the head coach, Rúben Amorim. "I really like it here but in football everything happens very fast and we have to adapt," Gyokeres said.

Amorim, who had been linked with taking charge at Liverpool and Chelsea, has said he will stay at Sporting after leading the team to their second league title in four seasons.

Luka Modrić has agreed a one-year extension to his contract at Real Madrid, despite suggestions the 38-year-old midfielder might finally leave the Spanish champions when his previous deal expired this summer.

Bayern eyeing Kompany as replacement for Tuchel

Vincent Kompany is among those being considered as the next Bayern Munich manager, despite leading Burnley to relegation from the Premier League this season (Constantin Eckner writes).

The Belgian took Burnley to a total of 101 points as they dominated the Sky Bet Championship last season. However, they went back down after winning only five of 38 matches.

Bayern agreed with Thomas Tuchel that he would leave the Allianz Arena this summer, a year before his contract was due to expire. They failed to win the Bundesliga for the first time since 2012, finishing third.

Kompany, who signed a five-year contract with Burnley last summer, was asked on Sunday about being linked with the vacant Brighton & Hove Albion job and replied: "I've never answered about my future, not once." It is not thought that Bayern have approached Burnley as yet.

Paquetá wants FA verdict to revive £70m City move

Gary Jacob

Lucas Paquetá's camp are keen for the FA to rule on the gambling allegations against the midfielder, who wants to revive a proposed £70 million move to Manchester City this summer.

The West Ham United player had looked set to join City in August last year but the deal collapsed when it emerged that he was being investigated for potential breaches of the FA's gambling rules. Paquetá's representatives are hoping for a decision before the transfer window opens on June 14.

City remain keen to sign the 26-year-old on similar terms to last summer, when they were willing to pay £70 million — less than his £85 million release clause at West Ham that becomes active next month. Paquetá's agents are

already believed to have agreed personal terms. West Ham have been frustrated by the time it has taken to investigate the case because the uncertainty may have an effect on their transfer plans, too. They do not want to be left trying to find a replacement for the Brazil international late in the transfer window.

Paquetá, who has a contract until 2027 with an option for an additional year, contributed eight goals and seven assists in all competitions this season.

The investigation into Paquetá centres on claims of suspicious betting patterns in Brazil around yellow cards shown to him. The bets were not placed by Paquetá, but people close to him are being investigated. Paquetá denies any wrongdoing, knowledge or involvement. The FA has refused to comment on the status of the case.

How Arteta turned Arsenal

The north London club fell just short in the title race but were considerably better than last year thanks in part to their January break. **Gary Jacob** on a team that should improve again next season

The most goals the club have scored in a Premier League campaign. More wins than the “Invincibles”. The second-highest points tally in club history. As most metrics suggest, Arsenal have had an excellent season. Of course, the title eluded them, with Manchester City pipping them to it by two points. Nevertheless, Mikel Arteta has built a group that can overcome setbacks, have superb chemistry and will allow new signings to flourish.

From a mid-season getaway to their manager’s metaphors, this is how Arteta’s Arsenal concocted their greatest title challenge — so far.

THE DUBAI TRIP

‘It was a phenomenal camp in every sense’

As they made their way on to the plane to Dubai in the second week of January, Arsenal’s players could be forgiven for thinking that their campaign was taking on a familiar, depressing theme of missing out.

A year earlier Arteta’s team had made a vibrant start to the season, successfully navigated the break for the World Cup and strengthened their position at the top of the table. But they then slumped dismally in the run-in, winning only three of their final nine games. Their decline allowed City to glide past them.

Arsenal were again impressive in the early months of this season but this time their slump began earlier, around the turn of the year, with successive league defeats by West Ham United and Fulham followed by a home reverse against Liverpool in the third round of the FA Cup. From 61 shots in those three games, they scored only one goal.

The club departed for some winter sun with questions to answer. Were Arsenal about to fade out of the title race again? Were they lacking up front?

As with everything that concerns his first team, the Dubai trip had been meticulously planned by Arteta, now in his fifth year as the Arsenal manager. The Spaniard is obsessive, strict and dedicated to the club’s success. He wakes at 5am most days and will have recorded in his journal that he was still at the office until late afternoon on the day he turned 42 during the international break in March. He is also a meticulous leader who loves a structure, but in Dubai he was ready to strike a balance between training and downtime.

He thought that his players would relax more if they were joined by their families and given more free time than usual. There was a chance for partners and families to get to know one another, which Arteta understood could have a positive influence on bonds within his squad. Players did not need to report for meals at the same time and had to attend only the occasional commercial event in the afternoon.

The hope was that the players, who ordinarily spent much of their time having to stick to a regimented schedule, would appreciate the flexibility; that the trust and freedom away from home would be empowering and boost their

confidence. Part of this may have been down to Arteta having become more relaxed over the past year, which has helped him to develop better man-management skills. One change that went down well this season was to sometimes give the squad Mondays off after a win.

Arteta thought they could gel by mingling socially. A group of them, including Bukayo Saka, went to a beach club one day. Arteta himself was clearly able to relax, as seen in a post of him tilting his head back in a restaurant to eat a slice of steak given to him by the chef Salt Bae.

Although it felt like a holiday, it was not all play — far from it. Arteta and his coaches had done plenty of analysis and set to work on making the team’s attack more unpredictable and gaining small advantages, including from set pieces. He treated it like pre-season, with set training times in the morning, including some double sessions, at the Nad Al Sheba Sports Complex. Off the pitch, there were frank discussions about what had gone wrong.

On returning to a chilly London, the players and their manager felt the trip had been hugely beneficial. “We needed a break,” Martin Odegaard, the captain, said; he used the time to recover fully from a hip injury that had affected his form in the autumn. “We were in a tough moment, we were tired and needed a restart. We worked on details, had time off and came back strong.”

David Raya had joined on loan from Brentford three days after the season started and found the trip particularly helpful. He replaced Aaron Ramsdale in goal in September, creating a difficult situation. “The situation with Aaron was a big one,” Raya said. “He is a great goalie and a great character for the team and fans. I knew what was going to happen if I started playing — the noise. The turning point was the mid-season break in Dubai. I had the time to reconnect and take a breather from everything.”

Saka welcomed the break, especially as it came at a time when he seemed jaded and was managing an achilles problem. “We had time to rest,” he said. “We came back stronger.”

Arteta seemed genuinely thrilled as he looked ahead to the rest of the season. “It was a phenomenal camp in every sense,” he said. “We recharged. The beautiful moments we spent together. When you have families and kids, mixing life and the job, it is extremely necessary. They are living our lives and we want this to make sense [to them] so for everyone to be part of it is a positive.”

TEAM SPIRIT

‘The power of team bonding, nobody knows’

Arteta’s bristling optimism was soon shown to be well placed, with his team winning their next eight league matches, scoring 33 goals. Their ninth was a goalless draw at the Etihad, a marked contrast to their 4-1 drubbing in the corresponding fixture last season and another sign of progress. After that, they matched City pretty much win for win in a compelling finale to the season but



losing 2-0 at home to Aston Villa last month proved decisive. City are champions again but there is no doubt that Arsenal have made considerable progress and that Arteta versus Pep Guardiola is the great new managerial rivalry in England.

Clearly, the Dubai break has had an impact but there is no doubt that much of the good work was already in place. Team spirit and team building is something that Arteta had focused on from the start of his tenure in December 2019. Inheriting what he saw as a dressing room with too many difficult characters, he was quick to weed out players he saw as disruptive, notably Mesut Ozil and Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang.

Moving forward, he and Edu, the technical director, have carefully researched the personalities of potential signings. Creating an extended family, with players settling in quickly and forming close bonds, has been at the heart of what Arteta has tried to do. Integrating the many nationalities has been part of this and the squad have got together for Brazil and Japan days, and had a barbecue for families at London Colney in the penultimate week of this season.

“The power of team bonding, nobody knows, but sometimes you get amazing results with it,” Arteta said. “I’ve been in teams struggling to win and gone for dinner and [then] went on an unbelievable run.”

Arteta is close to his players, often seeking to stimulate or provoke them. He is especially keen on using imagery to stir emotions, once taking a lightbulb into a team meeting to show how it is nothing unless it is plugged in — a metaphor for a team having no power unless connected.

On another occasion, he showed them an olive tree to give them the idea that roots have to be nurtured if anything is to flourish, going so far as to plant a 150-year-old olive tree, similar in age to the club, outside his training-ground office. He also showed them the workings of a clock to explain that they all had to play a part for things to tick.

Sometimes on away trips he has put posters on the dressing-room walls with messages such as “intensity and aggression” on them. Other posters have been used to highlight the opponents’ weaknesses at set pieces, which was the message at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium and

Nearly men

Most wins by Arsenal in a Premier League season

2023-24	28
2022-23	26
2003-04	26
2001-02	26
2004-05	25

Best of the rest

Highest points tallies by teams not to win the Premier League

Liverpool (2018-19)	97
Liverpool (2021-22)	92
Arsenal (2023-24)	89
Man Utd (2011-12)	89
Man Utd (1994-95*)	88
Tottenham (2016-17)	86
Liverpool (2008-09)	86

*42-game season

into team who can rival City



Arteta, left, has forged a team with great unity, top right, from many different nationalities and personalities, with a trip to Dubai, middle right, helping the players gel. They were to be disappointed on the final day of the season despite beating Everton 2-1, bottom right, but will challenge again next term



London Stadium for wins over Tottenham Hotspur and West Ham.

Over time his nurturing has borne fruit, as his young squad have gained confidence and direction. This season Saka has overcome his shyness and found his voice in the leadership group. It has been common for him to question performances, tactics and details.

Odegaard, meanwhile, has grown as a captain. He has become more aware of the needs of his team-mates. The 25-year-old Norway playmaker is a popular figure and training-ground staff have given him a tea mug labelled "best captain ever".

Odegaard was the first person to text Kai Havertz to offer help when he signed for the club, and he dragged Declan Rice, another new signing, towards the supporters after they beat City to lift the Community Shield in August. In the Wembley dressing room, Arteta let his players toast that trophy over a crate of beer.

Team bonding has not come only from the manager and captain. On the team bus, Havertz leads the others in playing Mario Kart on the Nintendo Switch, taking the role of Luigi, an Italian plumber who likes to

drive speedily. "Mario Kart is unpredictable and it's so funny because everyone thinks he's the best and you fight for first place," Havertz said.

At the team hotel before matches, Jorginho likes to watch soap operas, such as *Family Ties*, about former hippies raising children, inviting lighthearted banter from the Brazilian players who compare this pastime to that of a grandmother. Oleksandr Zinchenko and Ben White lead the card game Uno, while the Brazilian players are big fans of Ludo.

Last year Arteta added a chocolate Labrador, affectionately known as Win, to the group. Win is not allowed on the training-ground pitch as the grass is sprayed with a chemical but is happy to watch and is not fazed by the ground's resident cat, Bob, who was adopted when his owner died.

Arteta likes that Win has, at times, inadvertently walked into important staff meetings. He lightens the atmosphere, is cuddled by players and sometimes stays at the houses of players, including White.

On the pitch too, and not just when they score, it is clear that this is a young, tight-knit group who care for

one another. Team spirit has been helped by the growing mutual appreciation between the players and the club's fans — a bond that has helped Emirates Stadium, in the past notoriously quiet, into one of the more vibrant venues in the country. A special moment before every home game is the singing of Louis Dunford's *The Angel (North London Forever)* before kick-off. In a classic Arteta exercise before the start of the season, he asked his squad to write on a whiteboard how they felt playing at the Emirates. Raya scribbled, "confident", Saka said "special" and Leandro Trossard wrote "magical".

Trossard can be stubborn, sometimes causing a difference of opinion with Arteta. But it has passed quickly and Trossard reflects that Arteta made a PowerPoint presentation at 10pm on the day after he joined from Brighton & Hove Albion, showing where and how the forward could evolve as a player.

THE SIGNINGS HAVE WORKED
'Kai Havertz scores again...'

The other key development this season has been the impact of last

summer's signings, notably the two big ones, Rice and Havertz. Arteta greeted Rice on his first day with a shirt that bore his name and message saying: "Hello, I am the new boy," and immediately impressed the England midfielder with his detailed tactical acumen. Arteta said of Rice: "I see Declan like a lighthouse, he will light up the others."

Having sung a version of Vanilla Ice's *Ice Ice Baby* as his initiation song, it wasn't long before the tune was reverberating around the Emirates after Rice's stoppage-time goal in the 3-1 win over Manchester United in September. If Rice found the change of fitness regime and playing style tough, it did not show on the pitch, where he was an instant hit. Rice became close to Trossard while in the United States in pre-season.

Havertz has taken much longer to settle. He hardly got off to the best start on the pre-season tour when the cameras were fixed on the new pair during a skills challenge event on the eve of Arsenal playing MLS All-Stars.

The ball was thrown in the air and players had to volley at goal. Havertz missed all five and was panned on social media. For a while that set the tone, with the German attracting considerable criticism, including from Arsenal fans, as he struggled to live up to his £65 million fee. Typically, Odegaard played a part in changing the narrative, handing the ball to the Germany international, then lacking in confidence, to score his first goal for the club from the penalty spot against Bournemouth in September.

Gradually, the performances have improved and the goals have come — nine of his 13 in the league since the winter break — and with them repeated renditions of a new favourite song among the faithful: "Sixty million down the drain, Kai Havertz scores again" to the tune of Shakira's *Waka Waka (This Time for Africa)*.

Earlier, Arteta had tried to make Havertz feel better when his form was patchy by offering an analogy with his persistence in his courtship of his wife, the actress Lorena Bernal. "I said, 'When I met my wife, at the beginning it was hard to conquer her,'" Arteta said. "I had to try and message, and go and go, and at the end when she said, 'Yes, we will be together,' it's beautiful. If she had said 'yes' on the first day, it's not so great."

Looking ahead to next season, his place within the team would seem assured. Arteta has so far opposed the view that for all their prowess in scoring 88 and 91 league goals over the past two seasons respectively, they would go up a level by signing a proven forward who could score 20 or more goals a season. Arteta has said he would "prefer that goals are shared because it is more probable that this is going to be maintainable".

Behind closed doors, Arteta is passionate about winning. After Arsenal conceded a stoppage-time goal to lose 1-0 to Porto in the Champions League round-of-16 first leg in February, he told his players in the dressing room that they could not afford to drop their standards and had to be footballers, and not wannabe stars, if they wanted to be successful and overtake City.

A year ago Arteta was critical of his players' attitude when they blew the title. This time he has been more relaxed in the run-in. He is already looking to where he can strengthen next season, hoping to sign a defender, defensive midfielder and forward. Arsenal are getting closer — can they overhaul City in 2024-25?

...but they still lack mentality of champions, claims Rodri

Charlotte Duncker

The Manchester City midfielder Rodri accused Arsenal of lacking the mentality of champions by claiming they lost the Premier League when they "played for a draw" at the Etihad Stadium.

City won their fourth consecutive Premier League title on Sunday, pipping Arsenal by two points in a tense race during which both teams spent 76 days at the top of the table before the final day. Arsenal, who also finished second to City last season, finished three points closer this time, but Rodri, below, has pinpointed the moment he believes was pivotal.

Mikel Arteta's side drew 0-0 at the Etihad at the end of March and were widely praised for a solid defensive display, but the City midfielder believes they could have been bolder and tried to turn one point into three, which proved the difference in the title race.

"I think the difference is in here," Rodri said, pointing to his head. "It's the mentality. When they came here and faced us here at the Etihad I saw them. These guys didn't want to beat us, they just wanted to draw, you know? And that mentality, we wouldn't do the same. If you give us one point we will win the last seven, eight games, even though it is tough."

City went on to win their final nine Premier League matches after that stalemate on March 31. For Pep Guardiola, however, the turning point came on April 14, when Arsenal lost at home to Aston Villa, hours after Liverpool — who had been in the title hunt before fading — had been beaten at home by Crystal Palace.

"I thought they had given us a chance, they will not give us another," Guardiola, the City manager, said. "I was really pleased with the way we competed, in the Champions League [also] we didn't lose a game [going out on penalties after two draws with Real Madrid]."

Having made history on Sunday by becoming the first English team to win four consecutive top-division titles, Guardiola, his squad and staff and their families headed into Manchester city centre to celebrate the achievement at the restaurant Fenix. The players have been given a couple of days off before preparation continues for the FA Cup final against Manchester United at Wembley on Saturday. City are looking to become the first team to win a back-to-back league and FA Cup double.

City will hold a celebratory bus parade on Sunday, regardless of the result in the cup final. The team will travel from the National Football Museum up Deansgate, giving fans another chance to see the Premier League trophy. The parade will not start until 7.30pm because the city is hosting the Great Manchester Run that day.



Sport Football

What we learnt from night inside VAR's nerve centre

While system needs improving, **Matt Dickinson** witnesses during Manchester City's crucial win at Tottenham the advantages offered by officials at Stockley Park that millions of fans do not see or hear



It is strange to stand in the video assistant referees' room on a match night thinking that this glass room on a business estate, with a handful of people going about their work with quiet earnestness, is the cause of so much emotional turmoil.

Stranger still to think that this ultra-modern Stockley Park facility near Heathrow would be closed down by some, even with it so sparklingly new, because they do not think we have the wit to make something as simple as a video-replay system work for football.

No one even at PGMOL, the referees' body, is denying that VAR needs to operate considerably better for everyone, but to be allowed inside last Tuesday, on the night when Manchester City beat Tottenham Hotspur to put one hand on the Premier League trophy, was to be sure that turning back the clock would make English football seem uniquely backward and foolish.

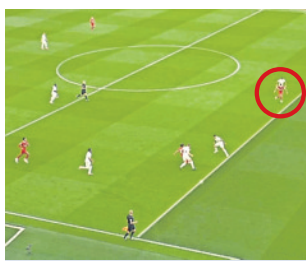
The hub resembles something between a City trading desk and a NASA control centre, with banks of screens showing the 28 different angles available from cameras in the stadium. A VAR and his assistant plus two replay operators pore over the action in real time and in slow motion, with a screen on three-second delay to ensure that the worst injustices do not distort the most-watched league in the world.

VAR needs to be judged against those big decisions — when to intervene, or not, with speed and certainty — and it needs to be improved, but it was interesting to observe other advantages that millions of fans watching cannot see or hear. For example, as the City players and bench initially erupted last week after Cristian Romero's collision with Ederson, which left the goalkeeper with a fractured eye socket, Chris Kavanagh, the referee, could manage all that high emotion knowing that he was entirely correct in believing it was not a red-card offence.

A quiet word from Michael Salisbury, the VAR, in his ear could confirm his judgment and Kavanagh could go about his work with assuredness. Like the game itself, he could move on to the next incident. To whip away that safety net and the reassurance delivered by a simple press of the red communications button on the desk in the VAR room — there is also a green button to bookmark an incident — would seem an oddly retrograde step.

Would the English game really turn back the clock to one man, who has to make 300 decisions a game while running 12km under all that Premier League pressure and scrutiny, being the last to know that he has made a game-changing, perhaps season-defining, blunder because he did not have a good line of sight for a foul or handball? Would we really move in the opposite direction to other countries and sports?

Of course the delivery has been flawed over VAR's five seasons of oper-



How Díaz error sparked change

A smaller pool of video assistant referees has been deployed after Luis Díaz had a "goal" wrongly disallowed for offence in Liverpool's defeat at Tottenham Hotspur in September. In the 11 weeks leading up to the mistake the Key Match Incidents Panel, which meets every week to assess decisions, found one error in every 6.9 matches. Since then, the ratio has been one in 19.

ation in the Premier League. At PGMOL, there is a sensible realism that the whole system was rushed into being before all the glitches had been discovered, never mind addressed.

Insufficient training of specialist VAR operators; goalposts shifting when it comes to interpreting the rules on, say, handball; unforeseen consequences, including the length of time for review; a lack of communication within stadiums. No one can dispute that it has been a bumpy initiation.

Howard Webb, technical director of PGMOL for just over a year, knows that this summer represents an important opportunity to reboot. One attempt to improve the system is to find a specialist pool of VARs. All elite referees are trained as VARs, but there is an acknowledgement that some are much better suited to it than others. The aim is to keep developing a small group, with the advantages already seen.

In the first 11 weeks of this season, leading up to the worst VAR mistake of all in Luis Díaz's wrongly disallowed

goal for Liverpool away to Tottenham Hotspur, there were 16 errors in 110 games — one every 6.9 matches — according to the Key Match Incidents panel, which meets every week to assess significant decisions. Operating with a smaller pool of VAR officials and using enhanced communications in response to that Díaz mistake, the tally became 13 errors in the next 247 games, or one in every 19.

PGMOL would like to train specialists best suited to the work, so there is a frustration that Ifab, the game's law-making body, insists on all VARs having officiated on the pitch at a high level. Is that necessary?

In an attempt to find the best VARs, referees in the Football League have been invited to have their skills evaluated. It could be that ex-players eventually make the grade, with the Professional Footballers' Association seeking 12 of its members for a three-year training course to become officials.

Of course some referees are reluctant to sit inside an office block, which is a very different experience from being on the pitch inside a packed stadium, despite the attempt to make Stockley Park feel connected to the sport: a gym for a pre-match workout, for example, and a tunnel to walk down into the main hub.

Recruiting better VARs will take time, but fans should see instant improvements next season. Announcements by referees inside grounds after reviews are long overdue.

Semi-automated offside checks should take about 40 seconds off the average check, according to data across different competitions. Webb is keen to maintain a high threshold for interventions, which is why the guidance to VARs for next season is likely to be to intervene only when the referee is "clearly wrong".

But there are some issues that only clubs and fans can change. For example, the perception of many supporters is that VAR interferes too much, yet most of the private complaints to PGMOL by clubs and managers is that they have been denied justice by insufficient interventions. There is no way that Webb and his team can fix that discrepancy in opinions.

The issue of subjectivity was highlighted recently in the game that led Nottingham Forest to send the infamous tweet impugning the VAR. When the Ashley Young "handball" in that game was shown to 18 leading English referees, nine said that they would have given handball and nine said they would not. Some decisions will always be highly subjective, even among those with expert knowledge of the Laws.

What Webb could be pleased about was that all 18 said that VAR should not intervene, whichever way the decision was given. It underlines that consistency can only come from a high bar for intervention — but will managers, players and supporters accept this

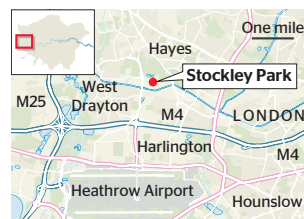


How VAR helped ref on Ederson

When Tottenham's Cristian Romero collided with Ederson and left the Manchester City goalkeeper with a fractured eye socket in last week's crucial

match in the title race the referee, Chris Kavanagh, could manage the furor of those on the touchline knowing he had made the right decision. Kavanagh

showed Romero a yellow card and his judgment was confirmed by Michael Salisbury, the video assistant referee at Stockley Park, who offered a quiet word in his ear.



approach or continue to complain when it does not favour them?

Several high-profile mistakes this season have damaged VAR's reputation. Most obviously the Díaz error but also the failure to punish André Onana on his debut for Manchester United against Wolverhampton Wanderers, when he clattered into Sasa Kalajdzic. And Young's foul on Callum Hudson-Odoi, the third of Forest's complaints that led to the furious tweet. The Premier League may point out that there were more than 100 times this season when VAR intervened to ensure a cor-

rect decision, but is anyone taking note? There is another discrepancy in that English officials are regularly used by Fifa and Uefa. Michael Oliver and Anthony Taylor and their teams of assistants, plus Stuart Attwell and David Coote as VARs, will head to Euro 2024. No country will have more officials in Germany. There will be English officials at the Olympics and Rebecca Welch will take charge of the Women's Champions League final on Saturday. Different perceptions, it appears, at home and abroad.

No one doubts that more English officials of that calibre need to be unearthed. There must be better consistency of delivery. At Stockley Park the training simulator is busy every week in that drive for improvement. Much work is needed, but you suspect future generations will have a dim view if the English game were to give up now in a tantrum. The calm inside that VAR room the other night felt a curious anomaly to so much of the self-serving heat that rages in this debate.



Full-back crisis is bad news for England forwards

Paul Joyce

The dilemma for Gareth Southgate is a familiar one — which full backs should he pick in his England squad?

However, rather than selecting from a position of strength and juggling an embarrassment of riches as he selects a provisional squad for Euro 2024 on Tuesday, the England manager finds himself checking a lengthy casualty list and will be hoping that a positive medical bulletin pops up from somewhere.

Luke Shaw has no minutes for Manchester United since mid-February; Chelsea's Ben Chilwell has 12 minutes since the previous England camp in March; his club-mate Reece James has played 30 minutes in the whole of 2024; Kieran Trippier, whose ability to play at right back or left back has often been a boon to his country, has played only 73 minutes since the first week of March for Newcastle United.

Rico Lewis has managed 290 minutes for champions Manchester City since March 31, but the 19-year-old has rarely played when it has truly mattered.

Consider, too, in central defence, that Harry Maguire has missed the final weeks of Manchester United's Premier League season, Levi Colwill has not played for Chelsea since March 2, Marc Guéhi has featured for only 98 minutes since February 3 for Crystal Palace and John Stones has, peculiarly, found himself warming the substitutes' bench in recent weeks under Pep Guardiola.

Brighton & Hove Albion's Lewis Dunk has an injury and even the uncapped Tino Livramento has ended the season on the sidelines with Newcastle United. Arsenal's Ben White has decided he does not want to play for England under this regime.

The lack of certainty, together with a desire to give key players every chance to be fit, suggests that when Southgate unveils his provisional party of about 30 names, it will be packed with defenders.

Uefa's decision to increase the final squad size from 23 players to 26 — Southgate must submit his list on June 8, the day after the final warm-up game against Iceland at Wembley — could benefit England more than most, and allows for a few gambles. Yet if defenders are stockpiled, then players such as Marcus Rashford, Jack Grealish, James Maddison and Ivan Toney will be sweating on making the eventual cut.

To an extent, the England manager has been here before. Maguire was recovering from an ankle ligament injury going into Euro 2020 and returned in the final group game, while Kyle Walker did likewise at the World Cup in Qatar, with his build-up to the tournament complicated by groin surgery.

Yet such a long injury list on the eve of the finals is largely unprecedented for Southgate and represents a significant headache for a coach who has prioritised solidity in each of his

previous tilts at ending the country's long wait for a major trophy.

Barring the games against Belgium at the World Cup in Russia, the first a dead rubber and the second the third-place play-off, Southgate has started only eight different defenders in his three tournaments: Walker, Stones, Maguire, Trippier, Shaw, Ashley Young, Tyrone Mings (also injured at present) and James. The goalkeeper, Jordan Pickford, has been an ever-present.

There is unlikely to be too much variation, for if Southgate were scribbling down a defensive line today for the opening game against Serbia in Gelsenkirchen on June 16, it might well be: Walker, Stones, Maguire or Guéhi (who played in midfield for Crystal Palace's 5-0 win over Aston Villa) and Trippier.

Southgate's faith in Trippier, who is reluctantly heading to Australia for Newcastle's two end-of-season friendlies, is well documented. The 33-year-old has made three appearances over the past week for his club and must now concentrate on building up his fitness, aware that the doubts over Shaw, 28, and Chilwell, 27, make him as important as ever to England. The lack of natural left backs is clearly a problem, but Southgate has few options. Palace's Tyrick Mitchell was capped two years ago, but has been overlooked ever since.

It may help Anthony Gordon's ambitions, with the Newcastle winger's work rate off the ball and willingness to track back something that may endear him further following on from the favourable impression he made in March.

Southgate is also yet to answer the conundrum of who should play alongside Declan Rice in midfield. For the warm-up matches, with Bosnia-Herzegovina at St James' Park on June 3 and then Iceland, Southgate could revert to the plan to road-test Trent Alexander-Arnold in the middle after injury scuppered the experiment back in March.

Kalvin Phillips, omitted from the last squad after a disastrous loan to West Ham United, has surely dropped out of the reckoning, which leaves Kobbie Mainoo, Jordan Henderson and Conor Gallagher in contention. Palace's Adam Wharton has also had rave reviews.

Alternatively, there is the potential to deploy Jude Bellingham deeper, although that may detract from his qualities in getting around the pitch and offering a threat in the final third.

So much of the outward fascination surrounding England in recent months has been whether Southgate will be bold enough to find room in his line-up for Bellingham, Phil Foden, Bukayo Saka and Harry Kane, yet many seemingly forget that they all started the World Cup quarter-final defeat by France.

Southgate will be inclined to focus on the other end of the pitch and whether he can muster a platform that finally gives England a springboard to success.



Shaw, Chilwell and Trippier have had injury-hit seasons

Review announcements in stadiums

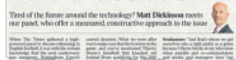
CONTINUED FROM BACK

using semi-automated offside in the Champions League compared with 2min 5sec without it in the English top flight.

From next season, referees will also announce their decisions over the stadium speakers after a VAR review, with officials already being trained in using clear wording. It is understood that a request to show incidents on big screens during the review period, allowing match-going fans to follow the process, has been rejected by Ifab for fear it could inflame tensions.

Wolves are believed to have asked whether VAR could be limited only to factual decisions — such as offside or whether a foul takes place inside the penalty area — which would negate any reason to send a referee to a screen, but Ifab will not allow leagues to

How can VAR be improved? These football experts have the solution



The Times refereeing summit last month recommended that VAR should only be used for the worst blunders

cherry-pick parts of the system. Before the final round of Premier League games on Sunday, there had been 107 correct interventions by VAR this season. That number will have increased on the final day with decisions such as the one to disallow Tomas Soucek's late goal for West Ham United, which was scored off his arm against

Manchester City when John Brooks, the referee, was unsighted. That could have led to extraordinary late drama in the title race.

The increase in correct decisions by more than 10 per cent to 96 per cent since the introduction of VAR has not assuaged many doubters, with Wolves calling for the vote and Nottingham Forest also highly vocal in criticism of officials.

There is awareness at the Premier League and PGMOL that significant work needs to be done before next season to win over more fans and, as one administrator put it, "reduce the noise" around VAR.

There were a record 1,246 goals scored this season, and only 46 ruled out after a VAR review. That makes it less than 4 per cent, though the chatter around the game seems at odds with that number.

Sport

The great entertainer

There's no LIV golfer we miss more than DeChambeau

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Arsenal make progress

Arteta's side pipped for title but are improving all the time

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'Clearly wrong' – new bar for VAR to step in

Referee chiefs plan changes before key vote

Matt Dickinson Senior Sports Writer

VAR officials are set to be told to intervene in Premier League matches only when a referee is "clearly wrong" next season among a number of changes intended to speed up the controversial system and ensure interference only for unarguable errors.

Several adjustments are being planned in the firm belief at the Premier League and Professional Game Match Officials Limited, the referees' organisation, that VAR needs to be improved rather than scrapped.

The leading 20 clubs will vote at their annual meeting on June 6 on whether to get rid of VAR after a request from Wolverhampton Wanderers. The resolution is not expected to gain the 14 votes it requires and the league will set about trying to win over sceptics.

While ifab, football's lawmaking body, controls VAR protocol, which maintains the "clear and obvious" threshold for intervention, there is a fear among English administrators that the phrase has been used and abused to such an extent that it has become almost meaningless.

Howard Webb, the chief refereeing officer of PGMOL, is known to be an advocate of the light-touch approach in line with Uefa, and VARs in the Premier League are likely to be guided before next season that they should intervene only when a referee is "clearly wrong". Otherwise they should respect the official's on-field call.

While the majority of VAR errors highlighted by the Key Match Incidents

(KMI) panel this season have been for a failure to intervene (25 out of 31) there is a belief that the threshold needs to stay high to maintain consistency, and to avoid fan unrest over delays.

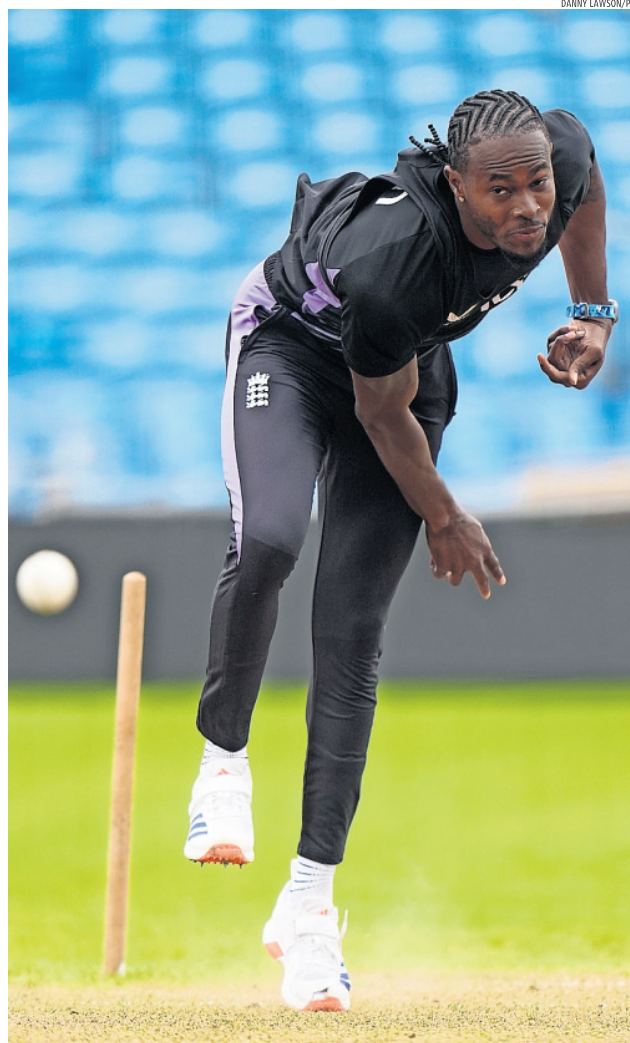
This tightening up of the wording follows a Times summit on officiating in which one of the main findings was a call to use VAR only for the worst blunders, as it was originally designed. Peter Walton, the former Premier League referee, told the commission that a mistake should "hit in the guts" for it to be reviewed.

Among the intended improvements, Webb also aims to use a smaller pool of specialist VARs, with data from this season showing a significant decline in the number of errors since a smaller group was deployed after the Luis Diaz debacle in September.

In the first 11 weeks of this season, leading up to the Liverpool forward's incorrectly disallowed goal in the away defeat by Tottenham Hotspur, there were 16 errors in 110 games — one every 6.9 matches — according to the KMI panel, which meets every week to assess significant decisions. Operating with a smaller pool of VAR officials and using the enhanced communications enforced by the Diaz mistake, the tally became 13 errors in the next 247 games — or one in every 19.

There is also confidence that semi-automated offside, due to be brought in next season, will make decisions quicker by an average of about 40 seconds. Data from this season shows an average decision time of 1min 26sec

Continued on page 61



DANNY LAWSON/PA

Archer fit and ready to return

Jofra Archer was bowling in the nets at Headingley yesterday with a view to the 29-year-old playing for England at a home venue for first time in almost four years, in the first T20 against Pakistan tomorrow. Cricket, pages 54-55

Slot's mission: help fix Núñez

Paul Joyce
Northern Football Correspondent

Arne Slot has been charged with helping Darwin Núñez and several of his team-mates fulfil their potential at Liverpool after being appointed officially as Jürgen Klopp's successor on a three-year deal.

Liverpool moved swiftly to confirm the arrival of the Dutchman, 45, just a day after the emotional Anfield farewell for Klopp, who won seven major honours, including the Champions League and Premier League, during his nine years at the club. Klopp's final campaign ended with success in the Carabao Cup and a third-place finish in the league.

There remains strong belief at Liverpool that there is more to come from the squad and Slot's ability to improve players, which he proved during his

Continued on page 56

Premiership name may go

Will Kelleher
Deputy Rugby Correspondent

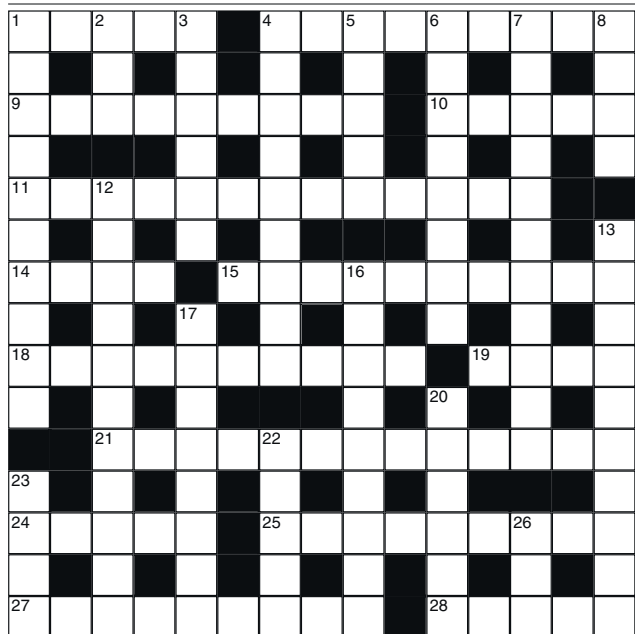
Premiership Rugby is considering changing the name of the English game's top division as part of a radical rebrand, in an effort to engage new supporters.

The Times can reveal that the executives who run English club rugby are also exploring moving the league's play-off semi-finals to neutral venues in future, but have signed an agreement with the RFU for the final to stay at Twickenham for a minimum of four years. They are then likely to renew that agreement until 2032.

Premiership Rugby has bold plans to reshape the club game by trying to attract new audiences and sponsors. As part of that vision, it has appointed external marketing consultants to

Continued on page 52

Times Crossword 28,922



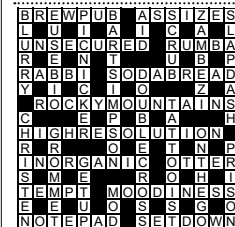
ACROSS

- 1 Biblical character appearing in different accounts (5)
- 4 Main views of America's capital — son flies around it (9)
- 9 Politicians follow this pretentious Liberal with long clothing (5,4)
- 10 Girl in part of Lorraine's territory (5)
- 11 Two newspapers with good quality info on music (4,9)
- 14 Tuber is more peculiar, cut the wrong way (4)
- 15 Driver's encouraging utterance, injecting a gas (10)
- 18 Having extraordinary perception, possibly I elect to maintain course (10)
- 19 Tips from arty quintet unoriginally aping *Kind of Blue* (4)
- 21 Swell financier in case of enquiry for charlatanism (13)
- 24 Child beginning to suck kind of rock (5)
- 25 Quite slowly, run through poor part of Los Angeles? (9)
- 27 Addressing persistent problem with temperance, drained drink again (9)
- 28 Circe's heart captured by enchanter one linked with Homer (5)

DOWN

- 1 People getting treatment join in wearing underwear (2-8)
- 2 You might inspire this song (3)
- 3 Most retiring from business having OK time (6)
- 4 Bandage put on tot, one firing missiles across the pond (9)
- 5 Fake laugh takes in Wolves' captain? (5)
- 6 Entertainer to practise deception in court? (8)
- 7 Like a playwright's irritation about Sterne novel (11)
- 8 Feature of underworld crook's perhaps reaching our ears (4)
- 12 Late winter period possibly framing occasionally duller literary setting (11)
- 13 Challenge for climbers changing gear on sides of slippery, icy area (6,4)
- 16 Make good rum — and beer is drunk (9)
- 17 Touring Portugal on vacation, Rose was extravagant (8)
- 20 It's doubtful absorbing books will show number of patriots (6)
- 22 US city tours, at intervals, covering large area (5)
- 23 Person at sea embraces Saint Nicholas, say (4)
- 26 Go off climbing — this peak? (3)

Yesterday's solution 28,921



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Have you seen this
woman on a dating site?

It's me and it's a scam



56



Hatfield



5' 2"



Say hi

I love paying in cash — I don't want my wife to know what I spend

Robert Crampton



Almost half of the respondents by Link, the ATM network, anticipate the emergence of a fully cashless society in their lifetime. About one in seven people never carry cash, up from just one in 25 only five years ago. I don't approve of this trend, yet I find it harder and harder to transact my business in cash. One side-effect of this is that, while my charity jar used to take me six months to fill with 1p, 2p, 5p and 10p coins (totalling about £150 as a rule — it's a big jar), it's been five years since I last emptied it and it's still only half full. I wonder if good causes are suffering from the trend.

Almost everyone I know more than ten years younger than me barely deals in the folding stuff. Yet everyone I know my age and older still pays for some things in cash. Or wants to, especially in tough times, budgeting being more straightforward with physical cash than with plastic. In Lidl I often see people paying with notes; in Waitrose I never do.

I've always loved cash, not for the purposes of avoiding VAT on tradesmen's bills, or buying drugs, or laundering the profits of a complex criminal enterprise, but for reasons of convenience, machismo and anonymity.

Card machines malfunction and become time-consuming. Technology in general frightens me, which is why I've never bought anything on Amazon. Ever. Dabbling plastic rather than handing over notes is also, I find, for deeply strange and inexplicable reasons, emasculating. There is simply no rugged, devil-may-care method of going contactless. Much better to have a wad of twenties on the hip, peeling them off as required. When my kids were in their early teens and starting to go out to the shops or parties, I'd relish slipping them an extra tenner their mother didn't know about. An innocent pleasure.

Talking of what their mother doesn't know about, the big appeal of cash for a man who has only a joint account and a highly numerate wife who does the marital books, is that it leaves no



trace. No digital footprint. No incriminating entries on the balance sheet to reveal my expenditure on a few of life's conveniences and indulgences. That's right. I could claim I prefer cash for high-minded libertarian reasons, rejecting the surveillance state, staying off-grid etc. But the truth is I don't want my wife to know how much I spend on fags.

Not just tobacco, either, but other discretionary items associated with moral laxity. A black cab when I might perhaps have claimed to have caught the bus home from a night out. The occasional cheeky, not strictly nutritionally necessary cheeseburger. In my drinking years, you'd have to add whisky too. And vodka. A lot of vodka. These days, it's more vitamin supplements and coffee. A shocking amount of coffee.

A fully cashless society would expose all manner of consumption-related sins of omission in many marriages, on both sides of the bed. Obviously, if there's a huge gambling or cocaine or designer handbag habit, then sleeping dogs must not be enabled to continue lying. Big secrets ruin marriages. But small secrets? Maybe they're forgivable. Maybe they're even necessary, to keep things sweet over the long haul.

D-Day is the latest shaming

There are plenty of reasons to feel pessimistic about the nation right now. One shocking scandal, cover-up and miscarriage of justice after another. Nobody taking the rap. Rivers, lakes and seas full of crap, while water bosses pay themselves record bonuses. Two thirds of adults overweight or obese. Millions reliant on food banks. Transport infrastructure conking out. And so on.

And now here's another shaming story. Small-scale, maybe, compared with the list above, but dismal all the same. The plan to drop 450 paratroopers over Normandy to commemorate D-Day 80 years ago is in jeopardy ... because the RAF can rustle up only one transport plane. One. That's embarrassing. Doubly so, considering the occasion.

Maybe owners of light aircraft could channel Dunkirk's Little Ships rescue act in reverse and offer lifts to a couple of paras each. Tricky to co-ordinate but sorting out the logistics for big events is still something we're good at here. Isn't it?

same as any other, but instead all nuanced shading, like a Farrow & Ball paint chart. He's still a handsome man, Kev (and he was great in *Yellowstone*), but these adornments aren't doing him any favours. For a guy evidently so keen on old-school male simplicity and clarity, I expected better of him.

Why was my

When Mandy Appleyard discovered that her photograph was being used by a stranger online, she began a personal quest to find out how it had happened

It's some years since I sailed into a safe harbour and dropped anchor on the peaceful contentment of single life, tired of bobbing about like a lost ball in stormy romantic waters. So when a male friend messaged me last summer to say he had seen my photograph and profile on match.com I was baffled. "Impossible!" I replied. "I'm not on match.com. You know me, I'm in romantic retirement."

"Well, take a look at this!" he said. Sure enough, a flattering photograph of me taken many years ago (posted online through my work and available by googling my name) headed a Match profile for "Clare5432, 56, 5ft 2in, in Hatfield", a "young-at-heart woman who enjoys dog walking and the outdoors" who was looking for a lasting relationship.

I was confused and a bit miffed, assuming this must be the work of a woman who was using my image because she was less confident in her own. I'm no ravishing beauty, so why she would have chosen my photograph rather than the millions of shots of much better-looking women available to her was unclear. I wondered how this deception would play out when it came to her meeting someone who had liked her dating profile.

Clare5432's profile was a close copy of one I had posted when I visited Tinder (looking for casual dates, not a relationship) briefly some years ago. I am young at heart, and I do love dog walking and the outdoors. However I am 63, 5ft 3in (these tiny increments matter when you're short), and live in North Yorkshire, a long way north of Hatfield.

I was annoyed — but first things first. I would need to contact Match, explain the mess and have it investigate then report back: simple. Except that contacting Match as a non-subscriber was a challenge beyond my capabilities. I pored over the website. "Match does not have a customer support phone number ... Please be aware that there are fake customer support numbers posted on various websites, none of which are affiliated with Match." My blood was boiling by the time I read: "Profile checking: all ads and photos are checked individually before they are published." What? My photos certainly hadn't been checked or they wouldn't have been published on a false profile for millions of people to see.

I asked my friend if he could message Clare5432 to tell her we were on to her. He kindly did so, but came back to me within minutes to say she had blocked him. "Would you contact Match then, and complain on my behalf?" I asked him. "Get them to take it down?" He did that, and Match took the profile down within hours. I assumed, naively, that was the end of the story.

My friends and I had a good laugh about this — another example of the ways in which online life trips us up and makes fools of us. It led to conversations about our experiences of internet dating, which for me has been entertaining but ultimately disappointing. On the rare occasions when I dipped a toe in the water I felt I was drowning in the murky flotsam of porky, shiny-bald tattooed men posting awful holiday photographs of themselves out on the lash with mates, pint in hand. Or sitting shirtless and glum on a leather sofa. Or smiling with their arm around a woman gouged out of the picture by Stanley knife or obliterated with marker pen. Or smiling proudly beside a lake, holding aloft — sometimes kissing — a large carp they had hooked.

The next circle of internet dating hell came, in my experience, when the messaging started. Literacy levels seemed especially low in my neck of the woods, and inane inquiries such as, "Well hello, deer, wot's a lovely lady like u got planed 4 2day?" were a speedy turn-off.

Knowing my face had been used to create a bogus dating profile, I was irritated that someone had stolen my picture and at least part of my bio to

“No part of me is flattered, instead I find it deeply creepy

sell themselves under false pretences. Terrible things happen on the internet, which from some angles looks like a cesspit of fraud, depravity and deception. What had happened to me wasn't the crime of the century but it felt decidedly icky.

Things were about to get worse. In January another male friend phoned me to say he was on Match and had seen my profile on there. He knew I wasn't online dating so he was immediately suspicious. I realised we were on familiar territory when he sent me a screenshot of "Wendy, 63, in Wakefield". It was the image of me that had been used last time, with a profile that described an outdoorsy free spirit. My pal immediately contacted Match on my behalf and straight away it took the profile down.

When this happened for the third time, earlier this month, I was livid. A male friend of a friend said he'd been reading my profile on Match the night before and really liked it. "Great picture of you too," he messaged. I told him I wasn't on Match and asked him to send me a screenshot. He hasn't — and now seems to have disappeared off the face of the earth. I can only

Bad hair day for Costner

What's Kevin Costner doing with his hair? Head and facial? His coiffure, pictured promoting his latest western at Cannes, is

all bouffed up, not the full Nancy Reagan but getting there. It has also gone a strange brownish-yellow colour, like when your grandad used to dye his remaining strands with a tea bag. There also appears to be more Costner hair than there was when he filmed *Waterworld* 30 years ago. It's not quite the

full woodland-creature-taken-up-residence Trump 'do but, even so, it's not far off jumping the species-boundary.

And then the face furniture: a Wild West (as fits a man obsessed with the subject) bushy bandito moustache, plus soul patch, plus light stubble, plus gingery eyebrows, no one hairy hue quite the

face stolen for a dating profile?

COVER: CLAIRE WOOD/SOLO SYNDICATION; BELOW: LORNE CAMPBELL/GUZELIAN



assume “my” image and profile are still up there for the world to see and exploit.

So I now know that my identity has been stolen by online dating scammers at least three times, although it could be 1,003 times for all I know. I’m made aware of the theft only when someone I know happens to stumble across it and takes the trouble to alert me.

“Don’t you feel just a bit flattered that someone has used your picture? They must think you’re attractive to have bothered!” a friend suggested. The answer is that I don’t. No part of me is flattered, instead I find it deeply creepy. It feels like a trespass on my life, a theft over which I have no control, an invasion of my privacy that makes me feel queasy but which I can’t stop happening again. And again.

I posted on Facebook that I was looking for advice on how to close this fraud down once and for all, hoping someone in my online social media community would have an answer. They did — but not the one I was hoping for. A journalist friend said this probably wasn’t a lone woman using a false profile as romantic bait. Instead, she suggested, it was more likely to be

the work of an industrial-scale scam where gangs of people in “fraud factories” (often in north Africa and southeast Asia) create false profiles on dating sites using stolen photos and false information. They then contact potential victims. Over time the conversations become more intimate and personal as the scammer builds trust with their target.

The targets are often vulnerable people in their fifties, sixties and seventies, perhaps new to dating after long marriages that have ended in divorce or bereavement, sometimes lonely, invariably trusting. Low-hanging fruit, in other words, for the wily thieves who groom them, telling them how beautiful and desirable they are, forge a speedy romantic connection and then ask for money — a little to begin with, a lot later on.

A friend of a friend was recently duped. She was messaged on a dating app by a tall, handsome jet-setting thirtysomething blue-eyed Dane, but was suspicious as to why he was interested in her, a 65-year-old widow. Let’s call her Wendy; let’s call him Henrik.

Henrik bombarded Wendy with

in-app messages and then, after she had given him her number, with texts, photographs of himself and WhatsApps. Within a week he was telling her he loved her and wanted to spend the rest of his life with her. Wendy was surprised but flattered and went with it. As time passed she wondered why he was so often “out of the country” and why in the voicemails he left her his accent didn’t sound like that of a Dane. She asked him about the accent. He sounded disgruntled, defensive, but said he had grown up in South Africa. Wendy was increasingly suspicious. When Henrik said he was stuck in Oslo and needed money to fly back to the UK she suggested he ask his father for the airfare. “Oh no, he’s too ill for me to ask,” Henrik replied.

The penny dropped for Wendy, who told Henrik she wanted nothing more to do with him and reported him. The same profile, with a different name, appeared on the online dating app that very day. These scammers commit a fraud, the false profile is reported and shut down, but the con artists immediately set up a new false profile using the same pictures — and on and on it goes.

Sadly there are a thousand iterations of this scenario: coercive controllers who manipulate vulnerable people into believing they have found love. They send photographs, gifs, songs

and poems during their “courtship”, telling their victims they are surgeons or spies, Nasa physicists or retired army colonels. They send (stolen) pictures of their children, their luxury home, their fast car, then one day start asking for gift cards, crypto, or money to buy heart surgery or a flight home.

The people perpetuating these cybercrimes are often doing so because they have been trafficked and trapped. Sixty Kenyans were rescued from “fraud factories” after the customer service jobs they applied for in Thailand turned out to be a cover for cybercrime. One woman had been promised a monthly salary of £675 but ended up targeting Americans by creating enticing profiles on Tinder, Instagram and Facebook. “They fall

in love with you and you can tell them about cryptocurrency. You start stealing from them,” the 31-year-old woman said, describing in Swahili how she was forced to work in a vast call centre-like hall with hundreds of people of many nationalities.

In Ghana a 22-year-old who goes by the false name Starflex works with two

friends, finding and luring victims into online romance scams. In one bedroom in Accra they huddle over their phones and laptops, exchanging intimate messages with “pals”, their codename for potential victims they meet on dating sites. To bait a suitor they comb Facebook and Instagram, swiping photos of influencers, actresses and adult film actors to create fake accounts on dating sites.

All of which brings us back to my predicament and how I’m being made to feel complicit in these grubby scams. My face is being used to deceive trusting people who could be fleeced of everything. The victims of a serious and organised crime repeated over and over again but which remains outside the victims’ control. I’m the

“**I’m being made to feel complicit in these grubby scams**”

frontwoman for online activity that may be illegal or dishonest. If it’s neither of those things it’s still plain embarrassing, because I have no idea what the person using my image is saying or doing.

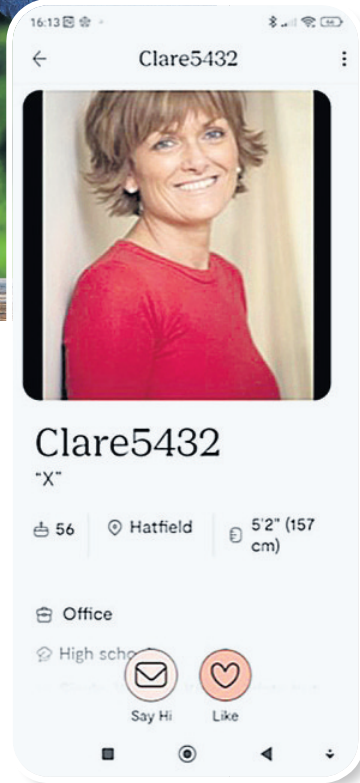
Someone who knows exactly how this feels is Christian Gerhard Boving, a Danish doctor who says scammers have been using photos of him for years to target victims online.

“Suddenly all these pictures were stolen by scammers using them to hit on innocent people around the world. They are cruel, sophisticated and evil people doing this.”

Boving has called on companies such as Meta, which owns Facebook and Instagram, to do more. “There should be verification of every new profile being created, like you have to verify yourself with a passport or driving licence, so you know it’s a real person behind the profile,” he says. Perhaps social media companies could use AI to trawl for photographs they know have been stolen and used before on fraudulent accounts — mine and Boving’s, for starters. Certainly the companies running dating apps should make it easy for non-subscribers such as me to contact them with a complaint.

The problem is getting worse, the latest figures showing that reports of romance fraud have risen by almost 60 per cent over four years. Action Fraud, the UK’s centre for fraud and cybercrime, says dating apps are a common place for scammers to find their victims. The top five platforms they use are Facebook, Plenty of Fish, Instagram, Tinder and Match.

As a journalist I like to think that I’m pretty savvy in the ways of the world, but stealing my credit card is one thing; stealing my face is something else. I’m tempted, next time this happens (and I have no doubt there will be a next time), to join whichever dating app is responsible and strike up a conversation with my alter ego. Let’s see where that takes me. Watch this space — and this face.



Top: Mandy Appleyard. Above: her image as seen on a dating profile

health

How to improve your high blood pressure — in three months

Whether knowingly or not, a third of the adult population lives with hypertension, a 'silent killer'. Experts tell **Peta Bee** the way to reverse the problem

About one in three UK adults (32 per cent) are thought to be living with high blood pressure, or hypertension, yet for as many as four million people in England it remains undiagnosed. A "silent killer", hypertension has few symptoms and takes hold insidiously, and if left untreated can lead to fatal heart attacks, kidney disease and vascular dementia. Yet a recent survey for NHS England found that among those midlifers who were most at risk, renewing insurance or getting a car MoT were ranked as a higher priority than a blood pressure test.

"Up to 50 per cent of the adult population has never had their blood pressure checked," says Dr Oliver Guttman, consultant cardiologist and honorary associate professor at Barts Health NHS Trust and the HCA Wellington Hospital. "It is something many people overlook, although ultimately it can be to their cost."

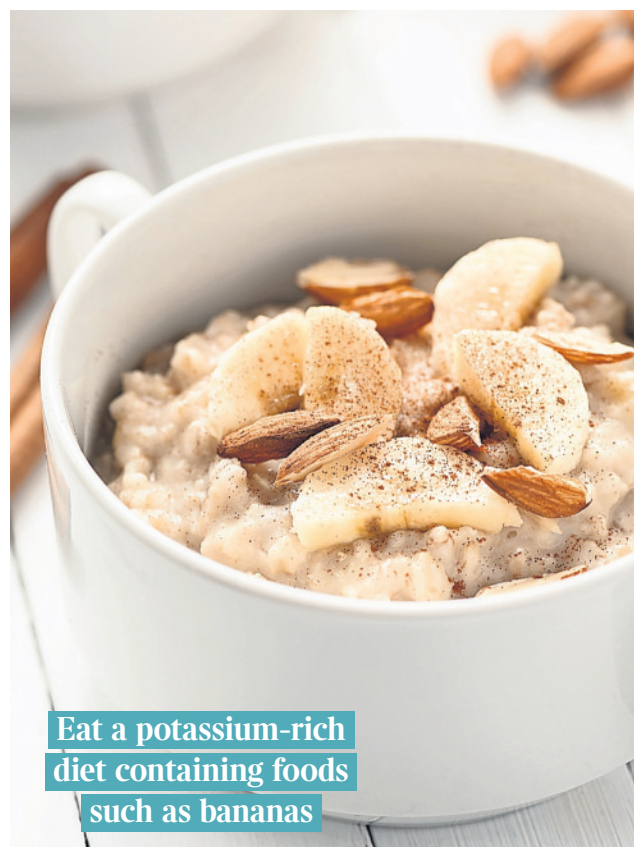
Up to 50 per cent of the adult population has never had their blood pressure checked

With each heartbeat, blood is pumped around the body through arteries that contract and relax as it pushes against the sides of the vessel walls. A certain amount of pressure is needed to ensure blood flows fluidly and effectively, providing energy and oxygen where required.

But if blood pressure is too high, it causes strain on the arteries and heart, increasing the risk of strokes, heart attacks and other health problems. "High blood pressure can damage arteries in the back of the eye, resulting in blurred vision and sight problems," Guttman says. "Over time it can also harm blood vessels so that blood flow to organs such as the kidneys is reduced, potentially causing long-term damage."

"Although there can be a genetic influence, too many of us eat too much salt and ultra-processed foods, drink too much alcohol or do too little exercise, all of which are risky for our blood pressure."

Good news of sorts is that while some people with hypertension will



Eat a potassium-rich diet containing foods such as bananas

need medication, many can reduce blood pressure naturally. "It won't happen overnight and I usually tell my patients that it will take about the same time to reverse the problem as it took to cause it in the first place," Guttman says. "But with the right habits in place, often within three months you can make a dramatic difference to the readings." Here's how:

Vary your exercise

Some forms of physical activity have particular benefits for blood pressure, helping to reduce inflammation and improve the performance of the heart. For a study published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine, Dr Jamie O'Driscoll, a researcher in cardiovascular physiology at

Canterbury Christ Church University, ranked exercise types according to the blood-pressure busting ability.

Top of his rankings was isometric exercise that entails holding a muscle under tension with no movement for a set time. Plank holds, low squats and wall sits are all examples. "When you release an isometric hold, there is a sudden increase in blood flow as the blood vessels dilate again," he says. "You don't get the same effect with other forms of exercise." In second place was running, which he says "improves blood pressure and also your body's ability to utilise oxygen", which is also important for preventing cardiovascular disease.

Bottom of O'Driscoll's pile for blood

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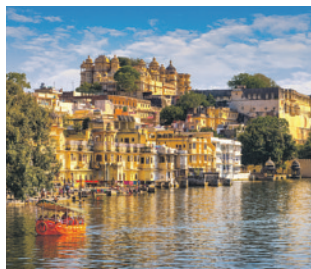
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pressure was high-intensity interval training, the short, sharp bursts of all-out effort that leave you breathing hard and sweating profusely. "HIIT produced the lowest reductions in blood pressure, but still had some impact," he says.

Check your blood pressure at home

Advice from the NHS is to get blood pressure tested every five years once you get to 40, and you can get tested free of charge at a community pharmacy from this age. But it is a good idea to keep tabs on your blood pressure more frequently. Guttman says DIY equipment varies widely but monitors that measure blood pressure at your upper arm, not your wrist or finger, are recommended by the British Heart Foundation.

"Some of the really cheap devices don't work well, but if you spend around £20-£30 you will get one that does the job," Guttman says. "I suggest my patients have their blood pressure checked in a pharmacy before using a home device to make sure the readings are the same and then to keep tabs on it."

Don't become obsessed with checking it several times a day or week because blood pressure ebbs and flows, although women taking HRT and people with heart disease in the family or with any medical issues should do tests more regularly.

"If you don't have existing high blood pressure, then once every couple of weeks or even every month is fine," Guttman says. "When you do check, sit down for ten minutes first and don't have a coffee or do

anything stressful just before the test, and do get a medical expert to check it every so often."

What are you looking for?

A blood pressure reading consists of two numbers. The top number is your systolic pressure, the highest level your blood pressure reaches during a heartbeat, and the bottom number is your diastolic reading, the lowest level your blood pressure hits between heartbeats.

A normal blood pressure range is between 90/60mmHg and 120/80mmHg. Guttman says a one-off high reading is usually nothing to worry about, but "if it remains high for two or three weeks you should arrange to see your GP or practice nurse". For the over-80s, a target blood pressure is under 150/90mmHg (or 145/85mmHg when measured at home), which is adjusted to account for arteries stiffening with age.

Eat even less salt

Although our salt consumption has dropped by 15 per cent in a decade, we could do better (the average adult consumes 8.1g a day, which is more than the recommended limit of 6g).

According to the charity Blood Pressure UK, eating too much salt remains "the single biggest cause of high blood pressure in the UK" and it warns that high intakes can interfere with blood pressure drugs, making them less effective. "Salt intakes are still much higher than they should be," Guttman says. "If you have a lot of salt in your diet, fluid is pulled back into the bloodstream, causing extra pressure on blood vessel walls so that blood pressure rises."

Eat more bananas, lentils, potatoes and avocados

Research has shown that a potassium-rich diet containing foods such as bananas, avocados, potatoes, dates, leafy greens and lentils can help to lower blood pressure. "Potassium plays a role in blood pressure control," says the nutritionist Rhiannon Lambert, author of *The Science of Nutrition*. "It does this by helping the body to remove salt from the bloodstream."

For a recent study, scientists at the George Institute of Global Health at Imperial College London analysed data from 20,995 participants, all of whom had high blood pressure or had suffered a stroke. Over five years, half of the participants were given normal table salt while the rest were asked to use a product in which some of the sodium was substituted for potassium. Results in the *Journal of Human Hypertension* showed that the potassium-enriched salt had a powerful blood-pressure-

lowering effect, with the researchers suggesting that up to 80 per cent of the benefit to blood pressure was down to the increase in potassium rather than a reduction in salt.

"High levels of sodium intake and low levels of potassium intake are widespread, and both are linked to high blood pressure and greater risk of stroke, heart disease and premature death," said Dr Polly Huang, a senior data analyst on the paper. "Using a salt substitute where part of the sodium chloride is replaced with potassium chloride addresses both problems at once."



Wall sits are particularly good for you

Aim to get seven hours' sleep

Too little sleep won't just leave you tired and tetchy. Over time it could cause your blood pressure to rise. In the most recent study to look at the link between sleep patterns and hypertension, researchers presenting at the American College of Cardiology's Annual Scientific Session in March looked at more than a million people from different countries who had no history of hypertension.

They showed that getting less than seven hours of shut-eye regularly was associated with a 7 per cent increase in blood pressure but that risk rose to 11 per cent in people who routinely slept for five hours or less. Although they didn't look at why poor sleepers were more prone to the condition, the researchers suggested that lifestyle habits and stress likely played a significant part.

Do wall sits for eight minutes

Of all isometric exercises, wall sits reign supreme for blood pressure, O'Driscoll says, because they engage the hamstrings, quadriceps and glutes, which are some of the body's largest muscles. If you find them tough — and who doesn't? — he recommends starting with a scaled-down version of the exercise.

"Don't feel you have to go in with a 90-degree angle at the knees," he says. "Better to widen the knee angle and to hold for two minutes at a time than to shorten the duration of the exercise." His findings suggest that a total of eight minutes per workout — repeating four sets of a two-minute isometric hold, with two minutes' rest in between — three times a week is enough to have a powerful effect on preventing hypertension. "Isometrics such as wall sits are a complementary form of exercise that should be done on top of general activity," he says. "But it can have a powerful impact on blood pressure."

Stretch or do yoga for half an hour

Studies have shown that stretching reduces stiffness in blood vessels so that there's less resistance to blood flow. Since it's resistance to blood flow that increases blood pressure, it follows that regular flexibility exercises can help to reduce hypertension.

For one study in the *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*, researchers from the University of Saskatchewan in Canada asked people with mild hypertension to add either a brisk daily walk or to spend 30 minutes a day stretching the body's larger muscles, including the quadriceps and hamstrings, on five days a week.

A control group made no changes to their routine. After eight weeks it was the stretching group that had the biggest reductions in blood pressure. "Stretching and yoga can also have the benefit of reducing stress," O'Driscoll says. "So it can pay to take time out for more mindful practices."

Do you need medication?

A reading of 140/90mmHg or higher over several weeks is considered the cut-off point for diagnosing high blood pressure.

"If your blood pressure is very high, then medication will likely be prescribed," Guttman says. "Most of them work by helping the blood vessels to relax and widen so that blood pressure is lowered."

Three ways to strengthen neck muscles

1 Start by moving your neck muscles more often

There are more than 20 muscles in the neck that are used to support and move the head. Strong neck muscles will aid good posture, reduce the risk of injury and help with breathing and swallowing, says the osteopath James Davies, author of *Body*. "Our neck muscles stretch to other parts of the body and from the base of the skull to the shoulder blades and the back," Davies says. Start with the simplest move to build up strength and mobility. "Sit with your head facing forward and shoulders relaxed," Davies says. "Then turn your head from side to side to look towards each of your shoulders." Repeat 4-5 times, several times a day.



2 Try isometric neck exercises

These involve holding the muscles under light tension for short periods. A 2022 review of 18 studies published in the *Journal of Medicine* found them to be effective for strength, mobility and pain.

"Having a strong neck means having a strong body," says the chartered physiotherapist Sammy Margo, who believes we should think of our neck muscles as part of the upper core. She suggests this simple isometric neck exercise: place your left palm on your forehead and press your forehead into the palm without moving your neck while keeping your head still. Hold for 5-10 seconds, release and repeat using the other hand. Then place your right hand on your right ear, push sideways into the palm. Swap sides. Repeat each exercise 3-4 times on both sides.

3 Add neck exercises at the gym

"Even if you don't play sports, a strong neck will help functional posture," says Ben Wadham, a personal trainer with Optimum Nutrition who works with the McLaren Formula 1 team.

He suggests adding dumbbell shrugs to your gym routine, to strengthen the trapezius muscles at the back of the neck: hold a weight in each hand and shrug shoulders to the ears. Try, too, isolation exercises using an exercise band. "Loop a light resistance band around the back of your head and a pole or bannister. Push into the band to create enough tension so that you feel your neck muscles working but you are not straining, holding for 2-3 seconds." Rest and repeat 3-4 times.

Peta Bee

health

One for the snorers: have you been tested for sleep apnoea?

Dr Mark Porter



It appears to have developed another bad habit. It has taken 61 years but, according to my wife, Ros, I have started snoring. Albeit just gentle purring, and only after a good night out with friends (if you get my drift). It's a minor inconvenience compared with the heavy snoring and obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA) that affects millions of people in the UK, most of whom remain blissfully unaware that it does far more harm than ruining their partner's sleep. Not least because most of them remain undiagnosed — at least for now.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (Nice) has just produced draft guidance on five new smart devices that could make diagnosing OSA easier. While accurate figures are hard to come by, the Sleep Apnoea Trust estimates that there are about four million adults in the UK with moderate to severe OSA, about three million of whom have yet to be diagnosed. Might you, or your partner, be among them?

There is far more to OSA than noise. Although most common in overweight middle-aged men and women, it can affect anyone, including children. Clues include heavy snoring punctuated by periods of silence, followed by a splutter before the snoring resumes. And it is the period of silence — when the person's upper airway is blocked and they can't breathe in — that causes the problem. Oxygen levels plummet before reflexes kick in, half waking the person before they nod off again. It's a cycle that can be repeated hundreds of times a night.

The most obvious repercussions are fatigue, irritability and daytime drowsiness. People with OSA typically complain that they don't feel refreshed even after a seemingly good night's sleep, will often struggle to focus and concentrate, and may even nod off inappropriately — one study suggests that OSA is a factor in as many as one in five road traffic accidents.

The longer-term health impact of poor sleep and low oxygen levels at

night are also of concern. Even allowing for the fact that many people with OSA have underlying health conditions, not least weight issues, the condition is linked to a higher risk of heart attack, stroke, atrial fibrillation (irregular heart rhythm), raised blood pressure and type 2 diabetes. And this is before you consider the effects on the person sharing your bed.

Diagnosis has advanced during my career. Today, home-testing (respiratory polygraphy) — sleeping with a band around your chest/abdomen, a flow sensor in your nostrils and an oxygen monitor (pulse oximeter) on your finger — is the norm. And the tech being assessed by Nice takes home testing a step further.

The new devices (WatchPat One, WatchPat 300, AcuPebble SA100, Brizzy and NightOwl) all claim to be very accurate and less likely to disturb sleep. The WatchPat 300, for instance, uses three points of contact (the wrist, finger and chest) to monitor pulse rate and volume, oxygen levels, body position, chest movement and snoring. Prices vary but I found it listed at £6,315 on sleep-tight.co.uk, with one night's rental (including interpretation by a sleep expert) costing £223. Caveat: this is merely for reference, not a recommendation. Not that these costs matter too much if these devices are approved by Nice for use on the NHS (in England anyway).

A final decision is expected in the autumn. In the meantime, for those with symptoms, your GP will be able to get the ball rolling with a referral to

“Some people will need to sleep in a special mask

a specialist clinic if appropriate. While you wait for an appointment, I suggest you try the screening tests below.

Milder cases of OSA may respond to lifestyle measures such as losing weight, stopping smoking and cutting back on alcohol. However, some people will need to sleep in a special mask attached to a device that gently blows air in through the nose to keep airways open (CPAP). About a million people in the UK have already been prescribed a CPAP device, about three quarters of whom use them regularly. You can read the draft guidance from Nice at [nice.org.uk](https://www.nice.org.uk) (search for “OSAHS home testing”). And for more on the diagnosis and treatment of OSA visit sleep-apnoea-trust.org

Take these tests if you think you have OSA

STOP-BANG: You are likely to have OSA if you answer yes to three or more of the following ...

S Do you snore loudly (enough to be heard through a closed door)?
T Do you often feel tired, fatigued or sleepy during the daytime?
O Has anyone observed you stop

breathing during your sleep?

P Do you have or are you being treated for high blood pressure?

B Body mass index more than 35?

A Age over 50?

N Neck greater than 40cm (just over 15.5in) in circumference (actual neck size, not collar size)?

G Gender male?

The Epworth Sleepiness Scale looks for excessive daytime drowsiness.

A score of 11 or more suggests a sleep-related problem but not necessarily OSA. You can calculate your score by going to asthmaandlung.org.uk and searching for “Epworth”.

YANGTZE CULTURE DIALOGUE

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Constant flow of ideas

One of the birthplaces of Chinese civilisation, the Yangtze River continues to promote dialogue and learning. Find out how Nanjing protects this vital artery of development

Rivers are symbolic of humanity — they provide a channel for exchanges and learning among people, and they run on an endless inflow of water, just as we depend on an inflow of new and vibrant generations.

The Yangtze River is one of the birthplaces of Chinese civilisation, carrying rich historical, cultural and ecological values. Nanjing is a city on the lower reaches of the river that is determined to protect the watercourse and promote mutual cultural learning between China and other countries.

River cities can empower rapid development, protect ecological environments and embrace cultural heritage. The city of Nanjing has been working on several initiatives to create discussion about the prominence and importance of rivers such as the Yangtze to the global community. This year, activities shaping such efforts range from sporting competitions to exhibitions and forums.

2024 Yangtze Culture Dialogue

What better way to celebrate the links between water and our civilisations than at the 10th World Water Forum in Bali, cohosted by Unesco. Meanwhile, Yangtze Culture Dialogue will also be held in Bali

as a special dialogue of the forum. The aim is to display the Yangtze River culture and provide a platform for exchanges and mutual learning among river cities across the world. Global experts and youth representatives in water conservancy and culture research will discuss topics such as the evolution of rivers, cities and civilisations and the special development of river basin history and culture. The dialogue is a continuation of the 2023 Yangtze River Forum themed on Flowing Rivers, Converging Future.

2024 Nanjing Universities Rowing Open

In April the Oxford and Cambridge university boat clubs competed in the unfamiliar surroundings of the Qinhuai, a river that flows through Nanjing to merge with the Yangtze. Teams from Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and China also competed in the open, but the traditional bumps race between the two famous English universities was included as an exhibition event for the first time.

The event captured the curiosity of extensive Chinese audiences and provided a chance for foreign viewers to understand the cultural heritage surrounding the waterway and the efforts of Nanjing to protect the Yangtze River.



Digital Heritage: Immersive Cultural Heritage Innovator Contest

The Yangtze River and its tributaries boast diverse cultural heritages along their banks, such as the Nanjing Dabao'en Temple, currently preparing for an exhibition in the Temple Site Museum. Young creatives from across the globe are invited to retell cultural heritage stories using digital media in the museum space.

So far, they have received 588 valid applications from 61 colleges and universities in 34 cities across 13 countries

Take me to the river

The Yangtze passes through Nanjing

and regions around the world. The creative works passing the final review will be displayed in autumn 2024.



Everything you can blame on your hormones (including your dad bod)

These messengers affect every aspect of our lives, a top endocrinologist tells Anna Maxted

You would expect an endocrinologist to focus on hormones, and Dr Max Nieuwdorp's book is indeed called *The Power of Hormones* — but some of its content is unexpected. We learn that he performed the first faecal transplant in the Netherlands, dissolving the main ingredient in a food mixer. The influx of gut bacteria, donated by the patient's son and delivered via colonoscopy, vanquished her infection of *Clostridium difficile*, a nasty bug that had caused chronic diarrhoea.

This anecdote is not a diversion. The book's subtitle is *The New Science of How Hormones Shape Every Aspect of Our Lives* — everything is connected. (Nieuwdorp also discovered that a change to our gut microbiota composition can increase insulin sensitivity. The gut is not just about "faeces and farts", he writes.) Hormones are "the messengers that drive every process in our body" and he examines their interplay in areas such as sleep, weight, stress, emotions and fertility.

They even weigh in on affairs of the heart. Nieuwdorp reveals that women's kisses "taste sweeter" during ovulation because their saliva is higher in sugar.

He also notes that men who smell women's armpit sweat around ovulation have raised testosterone in their saliva within the hour, increasing sexual desire. "Hormones are everywhere, and they are used for communication. Within our body, and also, between our bodies." The effects can be profound.

Does stress affect our weight?

"Periods of stress, poorer sleep, poorer diet, less exercise — all influence the way our hormones can function," Nieuwdorp says. Of people who are chronically stressed (measured via questionnaires and cortisol levels in hair), "most are more insulin-resistant, which means their metabolism is not good. Their glucose cannot be processed in a proper way." He cites studies that found that cortisol and blood sugar levels improved in people who regularly performed breathing exercises or yoga.

What about the weight of our unborn children?

Cortisol exposure in the womb may have epigenetic effects, he says. It can silence genes or make them more



active. In 2011 the Nieuwdorps received terrible news — their two-year-old son had liver cancer. He recovered, but during this agonising time Nieuwdorp's wife was pregnant, so for five months in utero their daughter was exposed to high levels of cortisol. "She showed signs of high cortisol exposure; gaining weight" — more easily than her family — "being more tense, crying, that kind of anxiety." Similarly, he notes, studies show mice pups exposed to maternal stress are "more anxious, have differences in metabolism".

On the plus side, nutritious food and responsive parenting helped. "The body is forgiving, so if you are aware of these effects, you can tackle them," he says.

Obesity: why losing weight isn't just about calories

Nieuwdorp, who is the head of department at the University of Amsterdam's Faculty of Medicine and chairman of the AMC Diabetes Centre, notes that if you were very obese as a child, it's probably genetic, but if it's developed in adulthood, diet or environment is more likely the cause.

Why is it so hard to lose weight permanently when you are very heavy? "It's important to know that every body has its 'set point' weight," he says. "Let's say, 90kg or 85kg — that's what the body sets its homeostasis at, it likes that. And usually for obese people it's higher than for lean people, which means when these people try to lose weight,

when they stop the diet, they go back to the set point weight, and it even goes up."

Another reason shedding weight is so hard is that "when you're obese, you usually have some inflammation of your adipose tissue. It starts making hormones such as leptin and resistin — which also affect the function of insulin and other hormones." (Leptin is a hormone involved in energy balance.) So if you then try to lose weight by eating less, there's resistance against it, he says, "because you have this inflamed adipose tissue, which sends danger signals to your body". Sensing trouble ahead, "it will try to keep nutrients as much as it can in our body".

Why reducing carbs can help

A 17st friend discovered he was insulin-resistant, I tell Nieuwdorp. His diet wasn't junky, but contained toast and pasta. He followed medical advice — to stop snacking and cut out starchy carbohydrates because the glucose overstimulated his insulin production, and when insulin is in the blood, it promotes energy storage.

With two months of nutritious, plant-high, lowish carb eating, and fasting from 8pm to midday, he lost more than a stone. The body loves carbs, Nieuwdorp says. "Carbs, glucose, dextrose, fructose — they all have this hedonic effect in our brain. Ah, happiness!"

The downside is "they have a very rapid uptake, so insulin has to rise very quickly," he adds. "And the carbs are usually stored in muscle when you are healthy, and in the liver as glycogen,

but when you are not healthy and insulin-resistant, they can also be stored in fat."

So "in a low-carb diet, you break the cycle. The body gets less addicted to this stimulus. Your glycogen is burnt, your insulin resistance usually improves, because the muscle can function better, the liver can function better. So you see the glucose levels drop." And if you start exercising, he adds (my friend didn't overdo it), "people start to burn fat". But be patient: "Twenty years of a high-sugar diet — you cannot lose that in a couple of months."

The truth about dad bods

It turns out the term is a misnomer: a man with "a BMI above 30, and more fat mass", Nieuwdorp notes, may be "depriving himself of his own fertility". This is because testosterone is converted in your fat tissue into oestrogen. "This might have some negative effect on the sperm quality, as the testosterone is lower," he says. Happily, it's reversible: "If you lose weight, your testosterone will go up."

What about women's bodies?

For women, weight and fertility is more complex. Unlike sperm cells, produced every 60-70 days, the eggs are there for 25 to 30 years before they are used. If obesity has been long-term, they're exposed "to more insulin resistance and all kinds of stimuli that badly influences the quality of the egg". Also being overweight — or underweight — is associated with lower progesterone, which reduces fertility in one in seven women. However, increasing fertility is rarely a case of "just fix the hormones". Stress can be a significant factor. Nieuwdorp sees patients who stop trying after IVF fails. "The pressure goes away, and they become pregnant in the natural way," he says.

How stress affects your muscles

In adults, growth hormone (GH) helps to build muscle mass. "It affects the muscle cell metabolism. It helps the muscle cell to take up nutrients, like glucose," he says. "But testosterone does this as well. We have multiple ways of maintaining muscle mass." Stress can do the opposite: "Cortisol can lower muscle mass in a high dose."

Good sleep, exercise and fasting all stimulate higher production of growth hormone, Nieuwdorp says. As for testosterone, "Only exercise is known to increase plasma testosterone levels in males and to a lesser extent in females." GH also helps us to burn fat, yet, he says, it's not as important for adults as its metabolism-regulating "co-pilots", thyroid hormone and insulin. Talking of which, one reason we're prone to gaining weight around menopause is because when oestrogen declines, "Suddenly thyroid and insulin don't function that well. All these hormones are linked."



Dr Max Nieuwdorp

The Power of Hormones by Max Nieuwdorp (Simon & Schuster £25). To order a copy go to timesbookshop.co.uk or call 020 3176 2935. Free UK standard P&P on online orders over £25. Special discount available for Times+ members

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Sleepovers used to be a teenage delight. But fast-forward a couple of decades and I am somehow, in my thirties with two children, having them again. Yes, a husband is a useful asset for bed-sharing and, it turns out, for having children, but it's not quite the same as the girly sleepovers of yore that I've reprised. It's the sisterhood aspect that I love — maybe a symptom of going to a same-sex school — but with make-up off, zero plans to rush off for and chilled rosé in the fridge, you can really get to the nub of an issue. It's essentially free therapy.

We live between London and Dorset and, in the countryside, sleepovers are the norm, no matter your age. Any spare rooms in London houses or flats are now filled with little people, but in the country there are plenty to go round. The adult sleepover has become a weekly event in our house, particularly with my husband working in London and my friends realising we are perfectly positioned for supper and a good sleep before pootling southwest to Devon or Cornwall. You just don't get that level of conversation from London dinner parties — people duck in, trot out a few funny anecdotes, then duck out, back to their expensive babysitters and needy dogs. Maybe it's the country air, or the realisation that you're stuck after a few glasses of wine and can properly bed in, but the deep, meaningful fireside chats I've had with girlfriends in the country are far removed from London's speed-date coffees and half-baked conversations in rowdy pubs.

What's more, once you have tinies, socialising (unless it's with others also embracing the chaos) can become more effort than it's worth. For me the joy of a countryside sleepover is that, once the children are fed, bathed and snoozing, you can press pause on playing "Mummy" and reclaim your previous identity for a few delicious hours. You can knock back the gin and tonic, swear or — as we did recently with a group of pregnant friends — call in a masseuse for Indian head massages after pudding. Cooking becomes a joy again, not a chore, and I tend to pull out the Ottolenghi books and take on more elaborate bakes and salads than I'd ever do just for us or for a time-pressured dinner party, with chatty girlfriends mucking in. And it's not all aubergine with pomegranate and moaning about renovations: we'll put the world to rights. We'll cover Ukraine, Britain's dirty water crisis, government childcare subsidies ... The kitchen switches to a boozy debate chamber around midnight, particularly when my lawyer friends stay, and cigarette breaks become a useful time-out.

In my experience those who arrive with children tend to make a beeline for the wine as soon as the baby monitor tells them they're fast asleep. Sleepovers before we had children



CHRIS MCANDREW FOR THE TIMES; GETTY IMAGES

Generation Zzz: the rise of the adult sleepover

Forget going out — staying in with all your friends is the new way to socialise, says **Rosalyn Wikeley**

Rosalyn Wikeley, left, and Anya Ryan

“You can pause playing ‘Mummy’ and reclaim your previous identity for a few delicious hours

involved nourishing suppers, maybe a pedicure and a film with a herbal tea. But wellbeing loses its charm when you're starved of sleep and scrubbing mushed carrot off the floor for the 80th time that day — you crave a little grown-up gossip and spice, both in your food and conversations.

Sleepovers have always been my bag. Some of the people who come to stay now are old school friends who recall, with hilarious clarity, how in our early twenties I'd call them at 11pm for a midweek sleepover, feeling sad and silly from weekend shenanigans at my London flat and in need of a herbal tea chat.

Like puppies in a basket, we'd all sleep round each other's houses as teenagers, crashing into crumpled beds after parties, dissecting every detail the following morning over carb-loaded breakfasts, frantically cleaning foundation marks off carpets already singed by hair straighteners.

We'd share toothbrushes, hairbrushes, Topshop dresses and ultimately bond in a way there just wasn't the time or space for at school. There's an intimacy to it I craved and still do — away from the dinner party bravado and poker-faced work grind. Now occasionally one of the said old school friends will crash in my bed after an evening at mine and we will laugh like children in the morning before grudgingly getting out of bed.

It's not confined to the girls. My husband has been tapping into his Norwegian roots with a little sauna project in the garden. He claims he wants to lure in his friends using the cycling paths that snake around us, so they'll stay over en route to Cornwall once we stop dividing our time and move back from London for good. What he really means to say is it's a toy to make the notion of a sleepover more appealing, and perhaps take the edge off the morning hangover.

Sleepovers are a joy for your inner adolescent, says Anya Ryan

Rise and shine, it's Sunday morning and — guess what? — I'm not alone in bed. There is a sleeping body curled up next to me, but it doesn't belong to a man I met the night before. It is a female friend I've known for years. Next to her is another and another ... and another.

Because this is our version of a sleepover club in east London. We might be well into our twenties and long past the years of boasting that we can stay up past 12 to gobble down sugary snacks. But about once a month my friends and I swap the usual weekend crowded pubs and restaurants for the comfort of our pyjamas and the sofa. And we're not alone. Adult sleepovers are having a moment — on TikTok the hashtag #sleepover has more than one million hits. So what's the appeal of this return to a dreamy teenage haven?

Back in the day, sleepovers were the peak event of the social calendar. I turned up to friends' houses, sleeping bag in hand, ready to talk in whispers about boys we ogled during the school day and then spend hours on their Facebook pictures.

In truth they're not all that dissimilar now. They're still the land of revelation. In games of Would You Rather I've disclosed long-hidden crushes and dared to do prank calls that have led to awkward next-day apologies. There are nostalgia bubbles — songs from the Noughties that accompany memories of our most tragic moments. We take it in turns to yell tunelessly into a karaoke mike. As midnight strikes more bags of crisps are ripped open, shots are downed and spoons are shared to scoop ice cream from the tub — the evening has just started, after all. The joy of a sleepover is that it is a time for your giddy inner adolescent to come out to play.

OK, the sleepovers of today are not quite a replica of those from years gone by. Ghost stories are swapped for tales of bad dates and worse sex. The evenings often become a rehearsal of our life woes and worries. We speak in detail about our fears for the future, our current relationship struggles and wonder where we'll all be in the next five years. We childishly imagine our hen dos, weddings and dream holidays — events that in this space of nostalgia feel decades away.

These chats are not unique to nights in. But somehow, as we cuddle up together in the absence of nightclub noise, it seems like the right time to open up. We've dedicated whole sleepovers to planning exit strategies out of long-term relationships; a break-up has left me weeping into the arms of a friend long into the morning light. Conversation keeps flowing. No one is likely to call it an early night when beds are just a few metres away.

Plus, sleepovers are easier on the pocket. Friends come with bottles of wine, film recommendations and pizzas in tow. The stress of how to get home is wiped away, so there's no excuse not to let loose. They're a fortress of girlhood, intimacy and sanctuary. And best of all? Breakfast together is just a few hours away.

Don't write about Tiananmen, the agent said — we're watching

As a play about the massacre opens in the UK, John Nathan hears how it overcame state intimidation

When I met the Hong Kong playwright Candace Chong Mui Ngam at her airy mansion block apartment in Kowloon on July 1, 2017, I asked her what she was working on. "I'm planning to write something about politics," she said, and it seemed no more contentious than if our own James Graham had said it. Chong, who lived with her doctor husband, their young son and a dog-sized red iguana called Elvis, had no reason to think that she would be subjected to a campaign of intimidation intended to make her abandon the project.

I had just begun filming a documentary looking at how artistic freedom of expression was faring in Hong Kong, two decades after British rule ended. Chong was one of these artists — a multi-award-winning writer who is as well known for her popular dramas as for socially engaged plays. When she said she wanted to write a political play it was not a provocation, merely the answer to my "what next" question.

It was 2018 before she felt able to reveal more. "In the early stages [of writing a play], the storyline is like a feather," she said. "Sneeze and it's gone." The play would be called *May 35th*, a term once used by Chinese people who wished to avoid the attention of the authorities when referring to the Tiananmen Square massacre of June 4, 1989, in which hundreds if not thousands of people were killed by the army. In mainland China the subject is banned.

"I had always wanted to write about June 4," she told me. Her focus would be the Tiananmen Mothers, as the group are known, who are forbidden to publicly mourn sons and daughters who died when China's army opened fire on pro-democracy protesters.

"I want to prove that the mothers existed," Chong said. "Those who are still alive are very old. I can imagine that when they die the history will be gone. I need to do it now because I don't know if freedom of speech will be affected in a few years."

"A few years" turned out to be optimistic. The wide-ranging Beijing-instigated national security law, brought in to suppress dissent in the wake of huge pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong, would be in place by 2020. When Chong and I



"Tank Man" in the aftermath of the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre. Below: Candace Chong Mui Ngam

“Periods of silence from ‘the agent’ were followed by sinister birthday or new year wishes

spoke in 2017, Xi Jinping was making his way to the former British colony for the first time as China's president, to mark the 20th anniversary of the UK's handover of the territory. Dissent and freedom of expression were still a robust pillar of Hong Kong culture; no one knew, except perhaps Xi, how quickly they would be dismantled.

Chong's confidence was shattered one April morning in 2018 when she took her elderly mother to hospital for physiotherapy, as she did regularly. Inside, a man politely introduced himself, then asked a question that froze her to the spot. "Are you working on something about June 4?"

"For the first 30 seconds my heart was beating like crazy," Chong later told me. But despite the shock and fear, questions immediately formed in her mind. How did he know? Why had he come to the hospital? Was he threatening her family?

"He looked like a businessman," she said. "He was very polite and spoke to me respectfully in Mandarin [as opposed to Cantonese, which is predominant in Hong Kong]. I don't know how to describe him. Not handsome, not ugly. Not short, not tall. Just an ordinary person."

He said that Chong's name had come up in a meeting in Beijing. She said, "I'm not doing anything illegal. Are you going to do something?"

He said: "I am not going to do something. I just hope you won't."

She was in no doubt that she had received a threat. But when Chong discovered that he had visited her parents first, the fear turned to anger. When she and I spoke we were

at a loss as to how to describe him. The stranger, the businessman? We settled on "the agent".

In the months that followed, periods of silence from "the agent" were followed by sinister birthday or new year wishes. Sometimes he would send Chong a picture of the theatre where her work was being performed as if to say — what? I'm a fan? I'm watching?

Did she ever consider abandoning the play? "No!" she said, shocked. "It just makes me feel I have to do it. They will not waste their time on me, and on a little play."

But she began to fear she was being watched and even followed. Hong Kong had become a battleground. Police were using violent tactics against pro-democracy protesters. One march became a procession of more than two million — over a quarter of Hong Kong's population. And still the messages from "the agent" came.

May 35th opened at the Shouson Theatre in Hong Kong Arts Centre on May 31, 2019. It is structured as a thriller, in which an elderly couple attempt to commemorate the death of their son in Tiananmen Square.

The first night was a glitzy affair and Hong Kong's theatre world turned out in force. I filmed the hubbub in the foyer, where Chong signed texts of her plays for excited fans, and then watched the performance. Perhaps it was because the fear of another Tiananmen Square was then all too real, but the play's climactic scene was among the most powerful moments I have experienced in a theatre.

When the play returned for a second run that July, Chong received a new message. "The agent" was coming. "I thought that perhaps if he sees it he

will also see that we are not bad people, that we only have good intentions," Chong later told me. But she needed him to understand what he had put her through. During the curtain call, heavily pregnant with her second child, she nervously waited as the cast took their bows. Eventually she stepped onto the stage and explained to the audience that sitting among them was a man who had attempted to halt *May 35th*.

The shock and outrage was audible. Chong switched from Cantonese to Mandarin so that "the agent" could better understand her. She told him of the fear he had inflicted, and that perhaps at this moment he might understand a little of that fear too. Should she reveal where he was sitting? But Chong preserved his anonymity. It was one of the last times the play would be performed in Hong Kong, where the work is effectively banned.

"The [Hong Kong] government is attempting to erase everything about June 4," says Lit Ming Wai, *May 35th*'s producer, who moved to the UK two years ago. "Books about it have been removed from the public library. The June 4 museum has been closed, the annual candlelight vigil has been stopped, the Pillar of Shame [a blood-red tower of dead bodies by the Danish sculptor Jens Galschiot] has been removed from Hong Kong University campus." A copy of that sculpture has been erected in the offices of Amnesty International UK, who are supporting Lit's production financially and with rehearsal space.

The fear of repercussions has reached here too. Most people attached to *May 35th*'s English-language premiere are working under pseudonyms — though not its British director Kim Pearce. "I do sometimes think, 'I was born in Luton in 1985, why do I care about Tiananmen more than my other white friends?'" Pearce told me. "But I remember reading James Fenton's poem *Tiananmen*, which was on the GCSE syllabus, and being profoundly moved. So it informed my worldview growing up."

Soon after she wrote *May 35th*, Chong ceded control of future productions to Lit's theatre company, which now owns the rights. Indeed, it needs saying that all my conversations with Chong — who still lives in Hong Kong, where she cares for her children and elderly father — took place before the national security law came into force. That legislation, expanded in March, has made it easy to imprison dissenters such as a friend Lit had to leave behind in Hong Kong: the human rights lawyer Chow Hang-tung is in jail for suggesting people light Tiananmen vigil candles and faces a potential ten year sentence. Mounting a play about Tiananmen in Hong Kong is now as unthinkable as it is in mainland China.

May 35th is at Southwark Playhouse Elephant, SE11, from May 29 to June 1, southwarkplayhouse.co.uk



Your weekday brain boost

**More
puzzles**
Pages 14-16

Every day, Monday to Thursday, a page of extra puzzles to give your brain an extended workout

Samurai medium

Fill each grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Where the puzzles overlap, the rows and columns do not go beyond their usual length.

3		7 5				8 4 6			5
	8 9 7	9 6			4 3			3 2	4 8 6
8 7 9		5 1 4		1	2 6		5 2 4 6	1 8 9	8 4 6
	7				1		6	7	
	5				6 8		8 2	6 3 1	3 4

	9	7	6		1		4	6				3
1		5		9			3					9
			1	4			2					
	7	4			3				6 7	4	1 9	
4	2	9 3		1 2					9	8	3	
				8					6 8		7	
3	1		9						4		7 6	
	8	6							5	4 6	2	
	6			3 5 2						2 9	4	

Suko

A 3x3 grid with a color gradient from light orange to dark orange. The grid contains numbers in circles: 25, 25, 18, 23, 12, 16, 17. The numbers are arranged in a pattern that suggests a magic square or a similar numerical puzzle.

Place the numbers 1 to 9 in the spaces so that the number in each circle is equal to the sum of the four surrounding spaces, and each colour total is correct

Mini Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x2 box contains the digits 1 to 6

	4	6	2	5	
3	5			4	6
4	6			3	2
	2	4	3	6	

**Solutions in
tomorrow's Times2**

Codeword

Every letter in the crossword-style grid, right, is represented by a number from 1 to 26. Each letter of the alphabet appears in the grid at least once. Use the letters already provided to work out the identity of further letters. Enter letters in the main grid and the smaller reference grid until all 26 letters of the alphabet have been accounted for. Proper nouns are excluded.

	7	21	4		11	21	25		4	23	26	3	
14		6		24		16		5		17			
26	14	14	11	24	1	1	24	24		26	11	8	
10		24		15		24		11		1		4	
10	24	11	4		17	11	24	26	13	20	24	11	
3				5		19		13		24		11	
16	6	12	21	11	24		14	4	14	14	3	24	
6		4		4		5		11				1	
2	26	21	6	13	3	24	13		9	24	24	5	
3		1		4		14		15		18		4	
19	24	13		8	20	26	11	3	26	13	26	6	
		24		4		3		16		11		14	
	16	14	4	3		4	21	13	3	26	22		

A B C D E ~~F~~ G H ~~I~~ J K ~~L~~ M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Sudoku fiendish

3 6 2	1 6 4	7 1	4
	1		2
2 8 9	3 5	9	5
	5		
5 4 9	6 8 2	3 8	1

Killer tricky

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Each set of cells joined by dotted lines must add up to the target number in its top-left corner. Within each set of cells joined by dotted lines, a digit cannot be repeated.

29	7		10	25	34		9
26		13			7		
			26	21	12		11
21					19		
	7		9				15
	3	30		9			
12			7	21			
	8					14	

Train Tracks

Lay tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of track go in each row and column. There are only straight sections and curved sections. The track cannot cross itself.

Futoshiki

Fill the blank squares so that every row and column contains each of the numbers 1 to 5 once only. The symbols between the squares indicate whether a number is larger ($>$) or smaller ($<$) than the number next to it.

<input type="text"/>	<	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
		^		v	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
					^
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
4	<input type="text"/>	<	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<
v	v				
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Yesterday's solutions

SAMURAI

1 9 3	7 2 6	4 5 8			6 9 7	5 4 8	3 1 2
6 8 2	9 4 5	3 7 1			2 4 5	3 6 1	7 9 8
4 7 5	8 1 3	6 2 9			3 1 8	9 2 7	5 6 4
8 3 1	6 5 2	9 4 7			1 7 9	8 3 4	2 5 6
2 5 7	3 9 4	1 8 6			4 8 3	6 5 2	1 7 9
9 6 4	1 8 7	2 3 5			5 2 6	7 1 9	8 4 3
7 2 8	4 6 1	5 9 3	2 4 7		8 6 1	4 7 3	9 2 5
3 4 6	5 7 9	8 1 2	9 6 5		7 3 4	2 9 5	6 8 1
5 1 9	2 3 8	7 6 4	1 8 3		9 5 2	1 8 6	4 3 7
		1 4 9	6 2 8	3 7 5			
		3 5 6	4 7 1	2 9 8			
		2 8 7	3 5 9	4 1 6			
9 3 6	5 2 8	4 7 1	8 3 6	5 2 9	4 6 7	3 8 1	
1 8 4	7 6 3	9 2 5	7 1 4	6 8 3	1 2 5	7 9 4	
7 2 5	1 4 9	6 3 8	5 9 2	1 4 7	8 3 9	5 2 6	
4 7 3	2 8 1	5 6 9		7 3 2	9 5 1	6 4 8	
2 6 8	4 9 5	7 1 2		4 9 6	3 7 8	2 1 5	
5 9 1	3 7 6	8 4 2		8 1 5	2 4 6	9 3 7	
3 4 9	8 1 7	2 5 6		9 7 4	5 8 2	1 6 3	
6 1 7	9 5 2	3 8 4		3 5 1	6 9 4	8 7 2	
8 5 7	6 3 4	1 9 7		2 6 8	7 1 3	4 5 5	

SUDOKU

4	5	1	8	6	9	7	2	3	8	3	2	9	7	5	4	6	1
2	6	7	4	3	1	5	6	9	1	7	5	2	4	6	8	9	3
9	8	3	2	8	4	1	8		4	9	6	1	3	8	7	2	5
6	1	5	3	8	7	9	4	2	7	4	9	8	6	1	5	3	2
7	9	4	5	2	6	3	8	1	5	1	8	7	2	3	6	4	9
3	2	8	1	9	4	6	7	5	2	6	3	5	9	4	1	7	8
5	3	2	6	4	8	1	9	7	3	5	4	6	1	9	2	8	7
8	7	9	2	1	3	5	2	4	9	2	1	4	8	7	3	5	6
1	4	9	2	7	8	3	6		6	8	7	3	5	2	9	1	4

KILLER

8	3	2	9	7	5	4	6	1
1	7	5	2	4	6	8	9	3
4	9	6	1	3	8	7	2	5
7	4	9	8	6	1	5	3	2
5	1	8	7	2	3	6	4	9
2	6	3	5	9	4	1	7	8
3	5	4	6	1	9	2	8	7
9	2	1	4	8	7	3	5	6
6	8	7	3	5	2	9	1	4

SUKO

TRAIN TRACKS

FUTOSHIKI

3	<	5	1	4	2
1	4	5	2	3	↑
2	>	1	4	>	3
4	3	2	<	5	1
5	2	3	1	4	↑

CODEWORD

	G	L	E	E	F	U	L	A	G	O
C	O			N	R		R			
H	A	C	K	S	A	W	I	R	E	V
I		U		H		I		L	Z	
O			C	O	M	M	A	T	A	
R	E	F	L	E	X		L			
Y	U		F		B	T				
E	S	T	A	T	E		I	M	P	E
O	S		C		A	O		A		
P	R	I	S	E		C	O	N	Q	
U	L		D		E			S		
S	Q	V	A	L	E	N	J	O	I	S

The fantasist crybaby who faked his own death

Carol Midgley TV review



Imposter: The Man Who Came Back from the Dead

Channel 4
★★★★☆

Blue Lights

BBC1
★★★★☆

The words “narcissist” and “psychopath” are now absurdly overused, deployed to describe anything from someone who pouts too much in a selfie to one who fails to weep sufficiently over a dead pet hamster. But for Nicholas Rossi (pseudonym Arthur Knight) the words feel inadequate.

Rossi, the convicted sex offender and faker of his death who has been extradited from Scotland to America,

where he is to stand trial for allegedly raping two women, is more than that. As **Imposter: The Man Who Came Back from the Dead** showed in forensic, often comic detail, Rossi seems to be a pernicious maniac and depraved fantasist.

He's also pretty terrible at accents. The American who tried to live out a fake identity in Glasgow as a posh English gent (but he claimed to have originally been an orphan in Dublin: all lies) seems to confound a label, yet one woman who claims she was trapped in her home by Rossi and raped called him an “evil parasite”.

But this ugly tale is also a documentary-maker's dream. Rossi is a grotesque figure, gasping away on an oxygen mask and marinated in his own grandiosity, but he loves the camera, inviting journalists and film-makers into his home and giving them footage of gold. His wife, Miranda, seemed totally under his spell.

The impressive line-up of witnesses — ranging from Rossi's victims to his father to the journalists who covered the case, including The Times's Marc Horne — painted a picture of a manipulative crybaby. Yet the tone was sometimes light and filmic, with cowboy-style music and interviews given titles such as “The Politician” and “The Publican”. But then this is a story stranger than fiction, so an element of irony was fair enough.



Nicholas Rossi leaving his extradition hearing in Edinburgh

It's hard to take seriously a man who wears slippers decorated with the Prince of Wales's feathers and who seriously claims that while he was in a coma with Covid at the height of the pandemic, the hospital let someone into intensive care to tattoo his arms to frame him (he was identified as Rossi from his tattoos and his fingerprints). But then we must take him seriously because the man is dangerous. His story, though, is gruesomely engrossing.

If you binge-watched it weeks ago, the finale of **Blue Lights** will be old news. But for the more “traditional” viewer ... were you thinking what I was thinking? Namely, that it left the ending open for Lee Thompson (Seamus O'Hara) to return for series three? I hope so. His exit — cast out like a pariah by his sister because, while trying to be a vigilante doing good, he had behaved as badly as the gangsters — felt a little too neat for a series that thrives on non-pat conclusions. Would Lee have just walked away like that? Perhaps. But he's a great character so I hope he's coming back. It has been an excellent series, with Grace and Stevie riding off in a black cab and Robin Graham apologising to Happy for doing nothing to stop the bombing that killed his father and brother to protect a valuable source. “I forgive you,” Happy said. Sob. Roll on series three.

Radio choice

Ben Dowell



Ken Clarke's Jazz Greats

Radio 4 Extra, 10.30am

It's nearly 50 years since the death of Duke Ellington, above, the American big band jazz leader, pianist and composer. The anniversary is as good an excuse as any for this repeat of the jazz fan and former chancellor's 2004 series. Ellington, took a simple dance orchestra formula from the 1920s and transformed it into the 1930s “big band era” of jazz. Clarke talked to the band leader Humphrey Lyttelton, who died in 2008, about Ellington's innovations, which included encouraging instrumentalists and singers to use unconventional sounds such as growling effects, which became one of his trademarks.

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Times Radio

Digital, web, smart speaker, app
5.00am Rosie Wright with **Early Breakfast**
6.00am Aasmah Mir and Stig Abell with **Times Radio Breakfast** **10.00am** Matt Chorley **1.00pm** Ed Vaizey **3.00pm** Fi Glover. **Times discussion**
5.00pm John Pienaar with **Times Radio Drive**
7.00pm Pienaar and Friends. Informed debate with leading figures **8.00pm** The Evening Edition with Kait Borsay. Engaging evening conversation **10.00pm** Carole Walker **1.00am** The Story **1.30am** Highlights from Matt Chorley **2.00am** The Best of Times Radio

Radio 2

FM: 88-90.2 MHz
6.30am The Zoe Ball Breakfast Show. Shaznay Lewis pops by 9.30 Gary Davies. With Tracks of My Years, in which Marian Keyes chooses her 10 favourite records **12.00pm** Jeremy Vine **2.00pm** Scott Mills. Scott catches up with Eurovision winner, Switzerland's Mero **4.00pm** Sara Cox **6.30pm** Sara Cox's Half Wower **7.00pm** Jo Whalley's Shiny Happy Playlist **7.30pm** Jo Whalley **9.00pm** The Jazz Show with Jamie Cullum **10.00pm** Trevor Nelson's Magnificent **7.10.30pm** Trevor Nelson's Rhythm Nation **12.00pm** OJ Borg **3.00am** Pick of the Pops (r) **4.00pm** Owain Wyn Evans

Radio 3

FM: 90.2-92.4 MHz
6.30am Breakfast
Petruc Trellany presents Radio 3's classical breakfast show. Including **7.00am**, **8.00pm** News. **7.30am**, **8.30pm** News headlines
9.30am Essential Classics
Georgia Mann plays the best in classical music, featuring new finds, some musical surprises and plenty of familiar favourites
1.00pm Classical Live
Linton Stephens showcases unique recordings of performances from the UK and beyond, including string quartet music from the Engaged Quartet from LSO St Luke's. Nielsen (*Helios* Overture Op 17); Bach (French Suite No 2 in C minor BWV 813); Mozart (*Rondo fur zwei Jager*, an arrangement for brass of the Horn Concerto No 4 K. 495 — Rondo Finale); Delius (*Florida* Suite — I. “Daybreak”); Bolognese (Sinfonie Concertante in Bb Op 6 No 2); Prokofiev (*Love For Three Oranges* Suite). From LSO St Luke's. Haydn (Quartet in Bb Op 76 No 4 “Sunrise”); Strauss (*Also Sprach Zarathustra* Op 30); Dyson (*Three Songs of Praise* — II. A Poet's Hymn); and Gipsy (*Jane Grey* Fantasy for viola and orchestra Op 15)

4.00 Composer of the Week:

Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908)
Donald Macleod takes a look at Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's friendship with his fellow composer Modest Mussorgsky and the other members of the so-called Mighty Handful. Rimsky-Korsakov (*The Maid of Pskov*. Overture; *Legend of Sadko*, Op 5; *Quintet*; and *Scheherazade*, Op 35 — 1st mvt, *The Sea and Sinbad's Ship*); and Mussorgsky: Rimsky-Korsakov (arranger) (*Night on the Bare Mountain*)

5.00 In Tune

Live music and interviews from the world's finest classical musicians

7.00 Classical Mixtape

A selection of classical favourites mixed with jazz, folk and music from around the world

7.30 Radio 3 in Concert

Martin Handley presents Edward Gardner conducting the LPO in the Prelude to Act 1 of Wagner's *Parsifal* and Tippet's Symphony No 2. Plus, they are joined by 2015 Chopin Competition winner Seong-Jin Cho for Beethoven's Piano Concerto No 4. Recorded at the Royal Festival Hall, London. Wagner (*Parsifal* — Prelude to Act 1); and Beethoven (Piano Concerto No 4 in G, Op 58)

9.45 The Essay: Art and Uncertainty

Margaret Heffernan explores how artists embrace uncertainty as a key part of the creative process, seeing it as a catalyst for their work (r)

10.00 Night Tracks

Sara Mohr-Pietsch presents an adventurous, immersive soundtrack for late-night listening, from classical to contemporary and everything in between

11.30 'Round Midnight

Soweto Kinch presents the best in jazz with a particular focus on the British scene

12.30am Through the Night

A concert by the young players of the Deutsche Streicherphilharmonie, including music by Bartok, Debussy and Janacek

Radio 4

FM: 92.4-94.6 MHz LW: 198kHz MW: 720 kHz

5.30am News Briefing

5.43 Prayer for the Day

5.45 Farming Today

6.00 Today

With Mishal Husain and Nick Robinson

9.00 Being Roman with Mary Beard

Mary Beard about the life of the Roman soldier Claudius Terebantianus (3/6)

9.30 All in the Mind

Claudia Hammond explores the limits and potential of the human mind (2/6)

10.00 Woman's Hour

Nuala McGovern presents the magazine

11.00 Screenshot

Ellen E Jones and Mark Kermode consider the career achievements of Meryl Streep, who turns 75 this year. Last in the series (r)

11.45 Book of the Week:

A Body Made of Glass

By Caroline Crampton. The author learns about the earliest understandings of hypochondria from the time of Hippocrates and how the word first referred to the abdomen. Read by Tuppence Middleton (2/5)

12.04pm Call You and Yours

1.00 The World at One

1.45 Shadow War: China and the West

A look at how Hong Kong has become a major source of friction with China (7/10)

2.00 The Archers (r)

2.15 Drama: The Invitation

By Katherine Chandler. Two mothers clash when one's daughter doesn't get an invitation to the other's birthday party. Comedy drama starring Siwan Morris

3.00 Short Cuts

Short documentaries and adventures in sound exploring the language of care (4/6)

3.30 Thinking Allowed

Thought-provoking issues (1/6)

4.00 Michael Sheen Gets into Character

Michael explores the transformation of Stanislavski's “system” into Strasberg's “Method” with help from Isaac Butler, Anne-Marie Duff and Michael Goldfarb (2/3)

4.30 When It Hits the Fan

The world of crisis management (4/12)

5.00 PM

6.00 Six O'Clock News

6.30 Thanks a Lot, Milton Jones!

The “king of one-liners” returns to the airwaves. Last in the series

7.00 The Archers

Neil offers support to a friend. Meanwhile, Kirsty has a secret weapon

7.15 Front Row

News, reviews and interviews from the worlds of art, literature, film and music

8.00 File on 4

Issues of major concern. Last in the series

8.40 In Touch

News for people who are blind or partially sighted, presented by Peter White

9.00 Crossing Continents

A report on the impact of climate change on the Caspian Sea (8/8)

9.30 The Bottom Line: The Decisions That Made Me A Leader

Evan Davis hosts the business conversation show, with insight from the people at the top (3/5)

10.00 The World Tonight

International news round-up presented by James Coomarasamy

10.45 Book at Bedtime:

Making Amends

Kieran, written by Nick Walker. In prison, Kieran had time to reflect on his past mistakes. Newly released, he aims to make amends to the woman he wronged.

11.00 Uncanny USA

Danny Robins investigates reports of supernatural activity (4/10)

11.30 Today in Parliament

News, views and analysis of the day's business in Westminster

12.00 News and Weather

12.30am Book of the Week:

A Body Made of Glass (2/5) (r)

12.48 Shipping Forecast

1.00 As BBC World Service

Radio 4 Extra

Digital only

8.00am The Fair Intellectual Club

8.30 Brooklyn 8.45 The Mill on the Floss **9.00** Yesterday in Parliament **9.30** Owning Colour **9.45** Daily Service **10.00** A Good Read

10.30 Ken Clarke's Jazz Greats

Profile of Duke Ellington. **See Radio Choice**

11.00 To Wake the Dead

11.45 The Resistance of Mrs Brown **12.00** Semi Circles

12.30pm The Goon Show

1.0 The Fair Intellectual Club **1.30** Brooklyn **1.45** The Mill on the Floss **2.00** The Personality Test **2.30** Artists **3.00** The Count of Monte Cristo **4.00** A Good Read **4.30** Ken Clarke's Jazz Greats **5.00** To Wake the Dead **5.45** The Resistance of Mrs Brown **6.00** Semi Circles. Comedy with Paula Wilcox **6.30** The Goon Show. Winston Seagoon battles the Big Brother Corporation **7.00** The Fair Intellectual Club. The scholarly secret society try to help Handel compose a new hit **7.30** Brooklyn. By Colm Toibin **7.45** The Mill on the Floss. By George Eliot **8.00** The Personality Test. Comedy panel show with guest host Roy Hattersley **8.30** Artists. Comedy with Mina Anwar **9.00** The Count of Monte Cristo. By Alexandre Dumas. Dramatised by Sebastian Baczkiewicz **10.00** Comedy Club: Thanks a Lot, Milton Jones! Milton throws caution and soup to the wind **10.30** Bridget Christie Minds the Gap. The comedian takes a look at women in politics. Last in the series **11.00** Rubbish. Excuses for being late **11.30** For One Horrible Moment. A terrible truth emerges in the Fens. Last in the series **11.45** Hearing with Hegley. Comic verse

Radio 5 Live

MW: 693, 909

5.00am Wake Up to Money

6.00 5 Live Breakfast **9.00** Nicky Campbell **11.00** Leila Nathoo **1.00pm** Nihal Arthanayake **4.00** 5 Live Drive **7.00** 5 Live Sport **9.00** Tennis. A look at the rise of Carlos Alcaraz **10.30** Gordon Smart **1.00am** Dotun Adebayo

talkSPORT

MW: 1053, 1089 kHz

5.00am Early Breakfast

6.00 talkSPORT Breakfast with Jeff Stelling **10.00** Jim White and Simon Jordan **1.00pm** Hawksbee and Jacobs **4.00** talkSPORT Drive with Andy Goldstein and Darren Bent **7.00** Kick Off. Debating all the big sporting issues

10.00 Sports Bar

12.00 Extra Time

Talk

Digital only

5.00am James Max

The day's top stories

6.30 Mike Graham

10.00 Julia Hartley Brewer **1.00pm** Ian Collins. Debates

4.00 Jeremy Kyle

7.00 Kevin O'Sullivan

10.00 Petrie Hosken

1.00am Paul Ross

6 Music

Digital only

5.00am Chris Hawkins

7.30 Lauren Laverne. With Benedict Cumberbatch **10.30** Nemone

1.00pm Craig Charles

4.00 Huw Stephens

7.00 New Music Fix

9.00 Riley & Coe

11.00 6 Music Artist in Residence

Yard Act **12.00** 6 Music's Indie Forever **1.00am** Mark Lamarr and Jim Jones Revue **3.00** 6 Music Live Hour **4.00** The 6 Music Playlist

Virgin Radio

Digital only

6.30am The Chris Evans Breakfast Show

with beybeyanyan **10.00** The Ryan Tubridy Show **1.00pm** Jayne Middlemiss **4.00** Ricky Wilson **7.00** Bam **10.00** Olivia Jones

1.00am Sean Goldsmith

4.00 Steve Denyer

Classic FM

FM: 100-102 MHz

6.30am Classic FM Breakfast

with Dan Walker **9.00** The Classic FM Hall of Fame Hour with Dan Walker **10.00** Alexander Armstrong **1.00pm** Tim Lihoreau **4.00** Margherita Taylor **7.00** Relaxing Evenings. Presented by Zeb Soanes **10.00** Calm Classics. With Ritula Shah **1.00am** Karthi Gnanasekaran **4.00** Early Breakfast

television & radio

Viewing Guide
Ben Dowell

The Great British Sewing Bee
BBC1, 9pm

Top pick We're now on series ten of the *Bake Off*-for-hemlines that has been preceded over by no lesser talents than Claudia Winkleman and Joe

Lycett in days gone by. Taking on hosting duties from the incumbent presenter Sara Pascoe while she looks after her new baby is a man who will be familiar to fans of the comedy set (appropriately) in the fictional Button House — the *Ghosts* star Kiell Smith-Bynoe. The actor is no stranger to drapery and

needlework, having appeared in a celebrity edition of the show. On the evidence of episode one he is a natural in front of the camera. This is also a rock-solid format that will need no introduction for fans: a dozen stitchers competing to be named Britain's best amateur sewer. Patrick Grant, a designer who has been part of the set-up from

the beginning, returns with Esme Young as the judging duo (75-year-old Young joined the show in 2016, so she's no newbie). In addition, familiar favourites — reduce, re-use, recycle week, holiday week and kids' week — take their place alongside freshly designed themes of sport, lingerie, design icons, diva and India. The challengers begin

with a task inspired by the first episode: a pattern challenge in which they work on a denim miniskirt. For the 90-minute transformation challenge they have to turn a T-shirt into a new garment without altering the neckline. For the final task they must produce their take on a casual day dress.

The Gathering
Channel 4, 9pm

Helen Walsh's teen mystery continues with a renewed focus on the suspects behind the attack on the gymnastics hopeful Kelly (Eva Morgan), who we saw in the opening scene being pushed under water at a beach rave. We've met middle-class

Jessica (Sadie Soverall) and her pushy mum Natalie (Vinette Robinson). Today's episode continues the class conflict from the first two instalments as youngsters are caught between broken families and different expectations. There is more dodgy intrigue when something happens to Jessica at a party.

	BBC1	BBC2	ITV1	Channel 4	Channel 5
Early	6.00am Breakfast 9.30 Rip Off Britain. Consumer show 10.15 The Moment of Proof. Police find the names of an international drug network in a hotel guest book (r) 10.45 Defenders: Busting the Bad Guys. A 15-year-old helps the Defenders bust shops selling vapes to children (r) 11.15 Homes Under the Hammer. Featuring properties in Eastbourne, Chesterton and Solihull 12.15pm Bargain Hunt. The best kitchen and garden antiques featured on the show (r) (AD) 1.00 BBC News at One; Weather 1.30 BBC Regional News; Weather 1.45 Doctors. Suni treats a young man who is out of his depth (AD) 2.15 Money for Nothing. A lighting designer tries to repurpose some old croquet sets 3.00 Escape to the Country. Sonali Shah helps a soon-to-be retired vicar and her husband on their search for a new home in Gloucestershire (r) (AD) 3.45 RHS Chelsea Flower Show. Nicki Chapman and Angellica Bell present coverage of Medals Day as the big winners of the year are crowned, and Toby Buckland brings garden design tips 4.30 The Finish Line. Roman Kemp and Sarah Greene host the quiz 5.15 Pointless. Quiz hosted by Alexander Armstrong and Josh Widdicombe 6.00 BBC News at Six; Weather 6.30 BBC Regional News; Weather	6.45am Money for Nothing (r) 7.30 Marcus Wareing Simply Provence (r) 8.00 Sign Zone: MasterChef (r) (AD, SL) 9.00 BBC News 12.15pm Politics Live. The latest stories from Westminster and beyond 1.00 Impossible. Rick Edwards hosts the quiz (r) 1.45 Mastermind. Specialist subjects include Francis I of France, and <i>Goodness Gracious Me</i> (r) 2.15 Great Coastal Railway Journeys. From Newcastle to Lymnouth (r) (AD) 2.45 The Farmers' Country Showdown. Hexham's fortnightly market brings hope to a farmer and his daughter (r) 3.15 Big Little Journeys. A Formosan pangolin travels through a land of giants to find a mate in a protected forest, while a family of golden-headed lion tamarins travel to the edge of their world (r) (AD) 4.15 Who Do You Think You Are? Sharon Osbourne investigates her family history (r) (AD) 5.15 Flog It! Caroline Hawley and Adam Partridge value items brought to Muncaster Castle, near Ravenglass in Cumbria (r) 6.00 Richard Osman's House of Games. Previous winners Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock, Ciarad Lloyd, Gareth Malone and Mike Wozniak compete (r) 6.30 Marcus Wareing Simply Provence. Marcus devises his own version of the French classic herbs de Provence	6.00am Good Morning Britain. Morning magazine featuring a lively mix of news and current affairs 9.00 Lorraine. Entertainment, current affairs and fashion news, as well as showbiz stories and gossip. Presented by Lorraine Kelly 10.00 This Morning. A mix of chat, lifestyle features, advice and competitions. Including Local Weather 12.30pm Loose Women. More interviews and topical debate from a female perspective 1.30 ITV News; Weather 1.55 Regional News; Weather 2.00 Dickinson's Real Deal. David Dickinson and the team visit Peterborough, where the dealers come across items including a chess set, a cockpit control panel and a painting (r) (AD) 3.00 Lingo. A mother and daughter duo from Derry, new parents from Aberdeen, and a mum and her daughter from London compete (r) 4.00 Tipping Point. Ben Shephard hosts the arcade-themed quiz in which contestants drop tokens down a choice of four chutes in the hope of winning a £10,000 jackpot (r) 5.00 The Chase. Bradley Walsh presents as contestants from Gloucester, Sheffield, Llandysul and Manchester work as a team to take on one of the ruthless Chasers (r) 6.00 Regional News; Weather 6.30 ITV News; Weather	6.30am 3rd Rock from the Sun (r) (AD) 7.45 Everybody Loves Raymond (r) (AD) 9.40 Frasier (r) (AD) 11.10 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. Gordon Ramsay clashes with the owner of Le Bistrot in Florida (r) 12.05pm Channel 4 News Summary 12.10 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. Gordon Ramsay revisits three restaurants he tried to save (r) 1.05 Find It, Fix It, Flog It. Henry Cole and Simon O'Brien head to Nantwich and Stoke-on-Trent (r) 2.10 Countdown. Pat Nevin is in Dictionary Corner 3.00 A Place in the Sun. Property expert Ben Hillman finds a recruitment company owner from Manchester help for a holiday home on Ibiza (r) 4.00 Narrow Escapes. A couple head towards Little Venice in London to launch their Accessible Waterways badge scheme (AD) 5.00 Come Dine with Me: The Professionals. In Swansea, chefs from the Secret Bar and Kitchen, The Plough and The Mine compete to win £1,000 6.00 Four in a Bed. The second visit of the week is at a Glamp in Style campsite in Battle, East Sussex but not everyone is keen to embrace the experience 6.30 The Simpsons. Members of the family appear as characters in a trilogy of classical stories, including Lisa as Joan of Arc (r) (AD)	6.00am Milkshake! 9.15 Jeremy Vine. The presenter and Storm Huntley discuss the latest news and get your views and opinions of the day 11.15 Storm Huntley. The broadcaster carries on the discussion and takes your calls to discuss the biggest stories of the day 12.45pm Friends. Joey auditions for a major television role (r) 1.10 Friends. Ross nervously prepares to meet Elizabeth's dad for the first time. Guest starring Bruce Willis (r) (AD) 1.40 5 News at Lunchtime 1.45 Home and Away. Stevie reveals she's organised to submit a self-tape for the audition, Mackenzie is desperate to learn more about her romantic rival (r) 2.15 FILM: <i>Deadly Secrets</i> (PG, TVM, 2023) When Jade finds out about her mother's financial problems, she sets commits a series of high-profile burglaries to pay off her mum's debts. Thriller with Lizzie Boys and Kate Drummond 4.00 Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun. It's action stations at an undies emporium and Benidorm gets sparkly for Pride (r) (AD) 5.00 5 News at 5 5.00 Police Interceptors. Officers swoop on a housing estate looking for suspects involved in a shooting, in what needs to be a tightly controlled operation if it is to be successful (r) 6.55 5 News Update



The new podcast about the

Roya Nikkhah, royal editor at The Sunday Times, and Kate Mansey, royal editor at The Times, present a new podcast examining the royals and everything they do. With their unique insight and wit, prepare to be both informed and entertained.

7PM	7.00 The One Show Presented by Alex Jones and Jermaine Jenas	7.00 Hairy Bikers: Route 66 Dave Myers and Si King visit a biker bar in Missouri to find out about the origins of Route 66, sample Yorkshire pudding wraps in Tulsa and cook with members of the Cherokee nation (2/6) (r) (AD)	7.30 Emmerdale Will encourages Dawn to go home and make up with Billy. Ella's behaviour leaves Mandy confused (AD)	7.00 Channel 4 News	7.00 Inside the Balmoral Hotel A look at the Balmoral hotel, a 10-storey Gothic pile, rising up across the Edinburgh skyline as a much-cherished landmark. This documentary includes a behind-the-scenes peek of its clock tower (r)
	7.30 EastEnders Whitney reels at Britney's revelation, while the Knights bond with Junior's family (AD)				7.55 5 News Update
8PM	8.00 MasterChef The final four take charge of one of the last ever restaurant services at Le Gavroche in London under the guidance of Michel Roux Jr before serving a plate of food with special meaning (AD)	8.00 RHS Chelsea Flower Show Monty Don and Joe Swift present the highlights of the garden design awards and Carol Klein shares the triumphs of the nurseries and growers. Dame Judi Dench joins Monty to share why she returns to the show year after year	8.00 For the Love of Dogs with Alison Hammond Alison meets a husky that has a mysterious problem with its back legs. Last in the series (AD) 8.30 Changing Ends Things start to look up for the Carrs as the Cobblers make the quarter finals, and Angela's marriage takes a nose dive (6/6) (AD)	8.00 Emergency Helicopter Medics New series. The East Anglian Air Ambulance crew fight to save their patient's partially amputated hand in Stowmarket and a motorcyclist in Hatfield suffers multiple injuries after colliding with a van (AD)	8.00 The Yorkshire Vet A farmer rushes his ewe to the practice with her lamb stuck mid delivery and Matt Smith takes aim to dart antibiotics into a poorly, young deer. At Cannon Hall Farm, Rohin Aojula scans to see if some alpacas are pregnant
9PM	9.00 The Great British Sewing Bee New series. Kiell Smith-Bynoe welcomes 12 new contestants into the sewing room as Patrick Grant and Esme Young set challenges inspired by the first series of the show. See <i>Viewing Guide</i> (1/10) (AD)	9.00 Cold Case Investigators: Solving Britain's Sex Crimes Modern DNA testing helps detectives find a rapist who has gone unpunished for nearly 30 years. Investigators reveal their findings on the identity of the man who kidnapped and sexually assaulted two schoolgirls in 2002 (2/2) (AD)	9.00 The Fortune Hotel The guests attempt to pack light in the Room Service Challenge before they embark on a Day Trip Challenge at the island's rum distillery. An offer of help at the Night Cap goes wrong, leaving one pair left in the cold (6/8) (AD)	9.00 The Gathering Adam's world is thrown into disarray when Jessica is rushed to hospital during his dad's birthday party — and Kelly seems to know the reason why. See <i>Viewing Guide</i> (3/6) (AD)	9.00 Into the Amazon with Robson Green New series. In this three-part series, Robson Green travels through the Amazon rainforest, exploring the environment, species and culture that live within the wilderness. See <i>Viewing Guide</i> (1/3)
10PM	10.00 BBC News ; Weather 10.30 BBC Regional News and Weather 10.40 FA Cup: Road To Wembley A musical review of this season's FA Cup	10.00 Meet the Richardsons Mock documentary starring Jon Richardson and Lucy Beaumont (1/6) (r) (AD) 10.30 Newsnight Analysis of the day's events with Kirsty Wark	10.00 ITV News at Ten 10.30 Regional News 10.45 The 1% Club Quiz game show hosted by Lee Mack in which the questions are all about logic and common sense with one hundred contestants in every show having a chance of winning up to £100,000 (r) (AD)	10.00 Imposter: The Man Who Came Back from the Dead DNA evidence proving Arthur Knight is Nicholas Rossi emerges in court but it's still unclear whether his wife is a victim or collaborator (3/4) (AD)	10.00 A Killer Makes a Call New series. Documenting calls made by killers to the authorities after committing a murder. Featuring reconstructions, interviews with those personally involved and insight from detectives who solved each case. The first edition of the series follows the 2011 murder of carpenter David Twigg, which was reported by his partner, Julie Dixon
11PM	11.15 Tokyo Vice Katagiri and Nagata increase their efforts, Jake gets invited to an exclusive party, and Samantha and Sato deal with a growing problem at the club (3/10) (AD)	11.15 All Is True (12, 2018) William Shakespeare is forced to return to face the demons of his past in Stratford when the Globe Theatre burns down. Ben Elton-scripted drama, directed by and starring Kenneth Branagh, with Judi Dench and Ian McKellen	11.35 ITV Studio Sessions Clara Amfo is joined by Tom Walker (3/6) (r)	11.05 Night Coppers A routine vehicle stop turns into a high-speed chase for two officers and an officer contends with a drunken reveller who has broken a security guard's finger. Meanwhile, two officers try to arrest a woman for stalking but are met with fierce resistance (6/6) (r) (AD)	11.30 The World's Most Luxurious Prison Ann Widdecombe takes a look inside Norway's Halden Prison, where inmates share plush flats (r)
Late	12.10am Tokyo Vice Ishida calls a summit as the new yakuza task force takes off (4/10) (AD) 1.10 Match of the Day: Top 10 Wingers 1.40 Live NBA: 2024 Conference Final. Coverage of a Conference final match, as the quest to win the title claimed by Denver Nuggets last year continues 4.25-6.00 BBC News. The latest headlines	12.50am Sign Zone: Secrets and Spies — A Nuclear Game Britain identifies Mikhail Gorbachev as a new contender for Soviet leader (r) (AD, SL) 1.50 Hidden Treasures of the National Trust. Cameras focus on Clivedon House and Polesden Lacey (r) (AD, SL) 2.50-3.50 Better Off Dead? (r) (AD, SL)	12.00 The Fortune Hotel The guests try to pack light in the Room Service Challenge before they embark on a Day Trip Challenge at the island's rum distillery. An offer of help goes wrong (r) (AD) 12.55am Shop on TV 3.00 The Fortune Hotel (r) (AD, SL) 3.50 Unwind with ITV 5.05-6.00 Celebrity Wheel of Fortune (r) (AD, SL)	12.05am Taskmaster (r) (AD, SL) 1.05 Late Night Lycett (r) 2.00 FILM: #Horror (18, 2015) Crime horror starring Emma Adler and Jessica Blank (SL) 3.35 The Simpsons (r) (AD) 4.00 Coca-Cola's Dirty Secret: Dispatches (r) (AD, SL) 4.30 Grand Designs Australia (r) (AD) 5.25 Beat the Chef (r) 5.50-6.30 Countdown (r)	12.30am Ultimate Police Interceptors (r) (AD) 1.25 PlayOJO Live Casino Show 3.25 Secret Scotland with Susan Calman (r) 4.10 Police Interceptors (r) 5.00 House Doctor (r) (SL) 5.20 Entertainment News on 5 5.30 Peppa Pig (r) (SL) 5.35 Thomas: Big World! Big Adventures! (r) (SL) 5.45-6.00 Paw Patrol (r) (SL)

television & radio

Into the Amazon with Robson Green

Channel 5, 9pm
Another week and another celebrity getting the “journey of a lifetime”. This time it’s Robson Green, the actor and erstwhile pop star. “This journey isn’t going to be easy,” he opens, and there is discomfort and a

rather alarming encounter with a large and hairy spider to contend with. But essentially this is a visually sumptuous jolly that does at least convey a sense of the vastness of the Amazon in an early sequence when he looks at the place from above before trying out local food and dancing.

The Guilty Innocent

Sky History/Now, 9pm
The second episode of the actor Christopher Eccleston’s look at famous crimes considers James Hanratty, who was hanged for murdering the government scientist Michael Gregsten and raping his lover Valerie Storie in

the early 1960s. The Hanratty affair was a cause célèbre for campaigners such as the journalist Paul Foot, but a bid for his conviction to be overturned was dismissed by the Court of Appeal in 2002 when DNA evidence was examined. However, there remain voices that claim he was innocent.

Storyville — The Gullspang Miracle: A Nordic Mystery

BBC4, 10pm
Maria Fredriksson’s extraordinary film begins with two sisters: May, who still lives in Norway, and Kari, who lives in Sweden. When May decides to move to Sweden to be closer

to her sibling, the two are astonished to discover that the owner of the apartment they want not only looks exactly like another of their sisters who died decades earlier but also goes by the same nickname, Lita. There are answers but many more questions as additional and unexpected wounds open.

Film Hampstead

Film4, 6.55pm
Based on the true story of Harry Hallowes, the Hermit of Hampstead Heath, this stars Diane Keaton as Emily, a rich American widow who falls in love with Donald (Brendan Gleeson), a health-dwelling “tramp” facing eviction by property developers. (12, 2017)

Sky Max

6.00am NCIS: Los Angeles (r) 7.00 DC’s Legends of Tomorrow (r) (AD) 8.00 The Flash (r) 9.00 Stargate SG-1 (r) 11.00 NCIS: Los Angeles (r) 12.00 The Flash (r) 1.00pm MacGyver (r) 3.00 Hawaii Five-0 (r) 4.00 S.W.A.T. (r) (AD) 5.00 DC’s Legends of Tomorrow. Ray and Kendra grow closer (r) (AD) 6.00 Stargate SG-1. O’Neill ages rapidly (r) 7.00 Stargate SG-1. O’Neill and Teal’c become trapped in an underground labyrinth (r) 8.00 Sport’s Funniest Moments. Farical moments from the sporting world (r) (AD) 9.00 A League of Their Own: Mexican Road Trip. The gang go on an adventure in Mexico (AD) 10.00 The Walking Dead. Rick embarks on a perilous rescue mission (r) 11.00 Hold the Front Page (r) (AD) 12.00 S.W.A.T. (AD) (r) 1.00am Resident Alien (r) (AD) 2.00 Hold the Front Page. Nish Kumar and Josh Widdicombe work for Bradford’s Telegraph & Argus (AD) 3.00 Peacemaker (r) 4.00 S.W.A.T. (r) (AD) 5.00 Highway Patrol (r)

Sky Atlantic

6.00am Fish Town (r) 7.00 The Guest Wing (r) (AD) 7.55 True Blood (r) 10.05 Billions (r) (AD) 12.15pm Game of Thrones (r) (AD) 1.20 Ray Donovan (r) (AD) 3.30 True Blood. Supernatural drama (r) 5.40 Billions. Double bill (r) (AD) 7.50 Game of Thrones. Arya makes progress in her training, Sansa confronts an old friend, Cersei faces a struggle and Jon embarks on a journey. Fantasy starring Lena Headey (r) (AD) 9.00 The Tattooist of Auschwitz. Lali strives to get medicine for Gita, asking Dr Schumann for help when he is sent to the hospital to tattoo prisoners there (r) (AD) 10.05 Succession. Kendall makes his case to Naomi Pierce (5/10) (r) (AD) 11.15 Band of Brothers. Two days after D-Day, Easy Company is sent to take the town of Carentan, a battle deemed a success despite the many resultant casualties (3/10) (r) 12.30am Domina (r) (AD) 1.30 The Outsider (r) (AD) 2.35 Game of Thrones (r) (AD) 3.45 In Treatment (r) 4.15 Fish Town (r)

Sky Documentaries

6.00am The Guest Wing (r) (AD) 7.00 Discovering: Jason Robards (r) (AD) 8.00 The Directors (r) (AD) 8.55 JFK: Destiny Betrayed (r) 10.00 The Invisible Pilot (r) (AD) 11.05 The Sixties (r) (AD) 12.00 Zuckerberg: King of the Metaverse (r) (AD) 2.00pm FILM: Busby (PG, 2019) A profile of the former Manchester United manager Matt Busby (AD) 4.00 The Directors (r) (AD) 5.00 Discovering: Jason Robards (r) (AD) 5.55 JFK: Destiny Betrayed (r) 7.00 The Invisible Pilot (2/3) (r) (AD) 8.05 The Sixties (2/10) (r) (AD) 9.00 An American Bombing: The Road to April 19th. Homegrown political violence (r) (AD) 11.00 FILM: Manhunt — The Search for Bin Laden (15, TVM, 2013) Documentary about CIA investigations into al-Qaeda 1.00am FILM: On the Record (15, 2020) Investigation into sexual assault allegations against Def Jam co-founder Russell Simmons (AD) 3.00 FILM: Project Nim (12, 2011) 5.00 Discovering: Jason Robards (r) (AD)

Sky Arts

6.00am Pavarotti: 10th Anniversary Gala 7.10 Punchdrunk: Behind the Mask 8.05 The Joy of Painting (AD) 9.05 Tales of the Unexpected (AD) 10.05 Alfred Hitchcock Presents 11.05 Discovering: Alan Rickman 12.00 The Joy of Painting (AD) 1.00pm Tales of the Unexpected (AD) 2.00 Inside Art: Eileen Agar at Whitechapel Gallery 2.30 Inside Art: Glyn Philpot at Pallant House 3.00 Skinner & Mina’s Literary Road Trip: Pope & Swift (AD) 4.00 Discovering: Harrison Ford. A profile of the American actor 5.00 The Joy of Painting (AD) 6.00 Tales of the Unexpected (AD) 7.00 Grand Ole Opry. With Carrie Underwood 8.00 Grand Ole Opry. With Kenny Chesney 9.30 Guy Garvey: From the Vaults 9.30 Johnson & Knopfler’s Music Legends 10.30 DH Lawrence: Sex, Exile and Greatness 11.30 Stories from the National Portrait Gallery 12.30am Michelangelo: Saint or Sinner? 2.20 The Art of Australia 3.35 Cheltenham Literature Festival 4.35 Auction

Sky Main Event

6.00am Sky Sports News 7.00 Good Morning Sports Fans 10.00 Live Tennis: The Grand Prix De Son Altesse Royale La Princesse Lalla Meryem. Coverage of day two of the WTA 250 event, a clay-court tournament at Club des Cheminots in Rabat, Morocco 1.00pm England Euro Squad Announcement 2.00 England Euro Squad Announcement 3.00 Live Indian Premier League: Kolkata Knight Riders v Sunrisers Hyderabad. Coverage of the first qualifier match from Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad 7.00 Live Tennis: The Grand Prix De Son Altesse Royale La Princesse Lalla Meryem. Coverage of day two of the WTA 250 event, a clay-court tournament at Club des Cheminots in Rabat, Morocco 9.00 Sky Sports News. The day’s sports news 10.00 Sky Sports News at Ten 10.30 Back Pages Tonight. A look at the sports headlines in tomorrow’s newspapers 11.00 Sky Sports News 12.00-6.00am Sky Sports News

Variations

BBC1 N Ireland
As BBC1 except: 10.40pm Killer Secrets — Spotlight. The Mid Ulster UVF 11.10 FA Cup: Road To Wembley. A musical review of this season’s FA Cup 11.45 Tokyo Vice. Katagiri and Nagata ramp up their efforts (AD) 12.00am-1.40 Tokyo Vice. Ishida calls a summit at the new yakazu task force takes off (AD)
BBC2 N Ireland
As BBC2 except: 11.15pm Dopesick. Rick and Randy’s criminal investigation threatens Sackler’s empire. Last in the series (AD) 12.20am-1.50 Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing. The River Exe in Devon (r) (AD)
BBC2 Wales
As BBC2 except: 1.45pm First Minister’s Questions 2.45-3.15 Mastermind (r)
STV
As ITV1 except: 10.30pm STV News 10.40 Scotland Tonight: 25 Years of Devolution. Colin Mackay and guests reflect on 25 years of the Scottish Parliament 11.15 The 1% Club. Quiz hosted by Lee Mack (r) (AD) 12.05am The Fortune Hotel. Alliances tighten while others plot against their rivals (r) (AD) 12.55-3.00 Shop on TV 3.50-5.05 Night Vision. News, sport and weather from across Scotland
UTV
As ITV1 except: 8.00pm-8.30 Keepers of the Lough. Two horses go for a splash about at Ballymorran Bay 10.45 Eamonn Mallie: Face to Face With. Eamonn speaks to the artist and children’s author Oliver Jeffers 11.45 For the Love of Dogs with Alison Hammond. Alison meets a husky with mysterious back leg problems. Last in the series (AD) 12.10am-12.55 The 1% Club (r) (AD)

royal family

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THE TIMES THE SUNDAY TIMES

BBC3

7.00pm The Fast and the Farmer-ish. Teams compete in a bale baton relay race 7.30 Shark Tank. Pitches include a one-of-a-kind custom song service. With guest Peter Jones 8.10 Shark Tank. With guest Tolia. Featuring a solution to a problem for swimmers and a tool to help cat lovers find their perfect match 8.55 The Catch Up. A round-up of the day’s news 9.00 Freddie Flintoff’s Field of Dreams. The boys’ behaviour is threatening preparations for their next game (2/3) (AD) 10.00 Man Like Mobeen. Jamal is assisted by Mobeen, with help from an unlikely source (AD) 10.25 Man Like Mobeen. Megalodon thows the prison into a full-blown riot (AD) 10.50 Fresh Cops. A sergeant pulls over a car and it results in finding a knife (3/4) 11.20 Fresh Cops. Adam returns to his first love of neighbourhood policing (4/4) 11.50 Glow Up: Britain’s Next Make-Up Star. The finalists give their all in a last chance to impress the judges. Hugh Vannog guests (AD) 12.50am Man Like Mobeen (AD) 1.40 Fresh Cops 2.40 Zen Motoring 2.55-3.50 Freddie Flintoff’s Field of Dreams (AD, SL)

BBC4

7.00pm Great British Railway Journeys. From Herne Bay to Leeds Castle, Kent (AD) 7.30 War Walks. Historian Richard Holmes describes the 1815 Battle of Waterloo (2/6) 8.00 Yes, Prime Minister. Jim wants to reform the system of local government 8.30 No Place Like Home. Arthur and Beryl decide to go off on a second honeymoon 9.00 Florence Nightingale. Drama starring Laura Fraser and Roy Hudd (AD) 10.00 The Gullspang Miracle: A Nordic Mystery — Storyville. A look at the story of two sisters who bought an apartment after witnessing a divine sign. When they met the seller they discovered she looked identical to their deceased sister. See Viewing Guide 11.50 Mission: JOY with Archbishop Desmond Tutu & the Dalai Lama. The 2015 meeting between Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama, during which they show how it is possible to remain joyful despite life’s many challenges 1.10am Great British Railway Journeys. Michael Portillo reaches the Kent seaside resort of Herne Bay (AD) 1.40 War Walks. The Battle of Waterloo 2.10-3.50 Civilisation. Double bill

Talking Pictures

6.00am What’s On PTV with Noel 6.10 FILM: Go West (U, 1925) (b/w) 7.45 Look at Life 8.00 Sherlock Holmes (b/w) 8.35 FILM: The Case of Charles Peace (12, 1949) (b/w) 10.20 FILM: Send for Paul Temple (PG, 1946) (b/w) 12.00 Wozel Gummidge 12.35pm FILM: Faces in the Dark (PG, 1960) (b/w) 2.15 FILM: On the Fiddle (PG, 1961) (b/w) 4.15 FILM: Ladies Who Do (U, 1963) comedy starring Peggy Mount (b/w) 5.55 The Beverly Hillsbillies (b/w) 6.30 Scotland Yard 7.05 Dangerous Knowledge (6/6) 7.35 Dangerous Assignment (b/w) 8.05 Manhunt. Nina is lured into a trap 9.05 Maigret. The owner of a company is shot 10.55 Cellaar Club with Caroline Munro 11.00 FILM: Lifeforce (18, 1985) Sci-fi horror starring Peter Firth and Steve Railsback 1.15am Cellaar Club with Caroline Munro 1.20 FILM: The Man Who Turned To Stone (18, 1957) (b/w) 2.50 Cellaar Club with Caroline Munro 2.55 FILM: Hyde Park Corner (PG, 1955) (b/w) 4.35 FILM: Bullet Scars (PG, 1942) (b/w) 5.50 Look at Life

Film4

11.00am The Man Between (U, 1953) Drama starring James Mason (b/w) 1.05pm Yesterday’s Enemy (PG, 1959) Second World War drama starring Stanley Baker (b/w) 3.00 Two Way Stretch (U, 1960) Comedy starring Peter Sellers and Bernard Cribbins (b/w) 4.45 Jason and the Argonauts (U, 1963) Fantasy adventure starring Todd Armstrong (AD) 6.55 Hampstead (12, 2017) A widow finds love with a man living wild on Hampstead Heath. Comedy drama starring Brendan Gleeson and Diane Keaton. See Viewing Guide (AD) 9.00 Le Mans ‘66 (12, 2019) Car designer Carroll Shelby and driver Ken Miles battle to build a revolutionary race car for Ford. Fact-based drama starring Matt Damon, Christian Bale and Jon Bernthal (AD) 12.05am Locke (15, 2013) A man facing the biggest challenge of his career finds his life unravelling over the course of one car journey after a single fateful decision. Thriller with Tom Hardy 1.45-3.45 Charlie’s Angels (15, 2000) Three private investigators are hired to rescue a computer genius and recover his latest creation. Action adventure starring Drew Barrymore

More4

8.55am A Place in the Sun 10.25 A New Life in the Sun 11.25 Find It, Fix It, Flog It (AD) 12.30pm Come Dine with Me (AD) 3.10 Four in a Bed 5.50 Château DIY (AD) 6.55 Car SOS. Tim and Fuzz restore the 1987 MG Metro 684 rally car. Last in the series (AD) 7.55 Grand Designs. Kevin McCulloch follows the building of a super-modern underground home on a hill outside Canterbury (3/11) (AD) 9.00 PopMaster TV. In the second heat, music enthusiasts from Winchester, Seaham, Salford, Stoke-on-Trent and Reigate are put to the test, to see who can secure a place in the grand final 10.00 Do You Remember... 1982? The songs, stories and trends of 1982, a year that saw the birth of Channel 4 and the birth of a future king, as well as the popularity of ET, big hair, legwarmers and Boy George (2/4) 11.05 24 Hours in A&E. Three young men from different walks of life are brought in, including a 17-year-old who has serious stab wounds, and a boy who impaled his leg on a fence (1/12) (AD) 12.05am PopMaster TV 1.10 Do You Remember... 1982? 2.15 24 Hours in A&E (AD) 3.20-3.50 A Place in the Sun

ITV2

6.00am CITV 9.00 Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records 9.10 Catchphrase: Catchiest Moments (AD) 10.00 Veronica Mars 11.00 Dawson’s Creek 12.00 Secret Crush (SL) 1.00pm Dress to Impress 2.00 Family Fortunes 3.00 Veronica Mars 4.00 Dawson’s Creek 5.00 Dress to Impress 6.00 Celebrity Catchphrase (AD) 7.00 Family Fortunes. Clans from Oxfordshire and St Helens compete on the game show 8.00 Bob’s Burgers. Tina and Louise attend a Boyz 4 Now concert (AD) 8.30 Bob’s Burgers. Bob chaperones a school trip to the museum and bonds with Louise (AD) 9.00 Hell’s Kitchen. After a wild night, the chefs endure a presentation challenge 10.00 Pleds. The boys set off on a wine-buying trip to Tuscany (AD) 10.30 Pleds. Marcus offers to tutor Barney (AD) 11.00 Family Guy (AD) 11.30 Family Guy (AD) 12.00 American Dad! (AD) 1.00am Bob’s Burgers (AD) 1.55 Hey Tracey! 2.50 Unwind with ITV 3.00 Teleshopping

ITV3

6.00am Classic Emmerdale 7.00 Classic Coronation Street 8.05 Endeavour (AD) 10.15 The Royal 11.25 Heartbeat (AD) 1.30pm Classic Emmerdale 2.35 Classic Coronation Street 3.45 Agatha Christie’s Marple (AD) 5.55 Heartbeat. Bellamy lands himself in trouble (AD) 6.55 Heartbeat. A terrified patient makes a shocking revelation (AD) 8.00 Midsomer Murders. When the owner of an equestrian centre is trampled by his horse, DCI Barnaby must unravel a web from the past, where nothing is as it seems (AD) 10.00 After the Flood. Jo is troubled by Lee’s connection to Tasha and Daniel, but as she continues with her investigation Pat grows ever more suspicious (3/6) (AD) 11.00 After the Flood. As the investigation escalates and suspicion builds around Tasha, Jo finally makes a breakthrough but Molly finds herself in danger (4/6) (AD) 11.50 The Royal. Lizzie is blamed for a man’s death, and Weatherill helps deliver a baby (5/6) 12.40am Upstairs, Downstairs 1.40 Bless This House 2.05 Unwind with ITV 2.30 Teleshopping

ITV4

6.00am British Touring Cars 6.10 Minder (AD, SL) 7.10 The Sweeney (SL) 8.10 The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes (AD, SL) 9.15 Magnum, PI (AD, SL) 10.20 Kojak 11.25 Battlebirds 12.25pm The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes (AD) 1.40 Magnum, PI (AD) 2.40 Kojak 3.40 Minder (AD) 4.50 The Sweeney 5.55 Battlebirds. There’s a surprising twist 6.55 The Grand Fishing Adventure. All and Bobby try to catch a shark over 400lbs (AD) 8.00 The Grand Fishing Adventure. All and Bobby head to Nottinghamshire (AD) 9.00 FILM: The Outlaw Josey Wales (18, 1976) A Civil War veteran crossing America in search of sanctuary attracts a strange assortment of fellow travellers. Western, directed by and starring Clint Eastwood. With Chief Dan George and Sandra Locke (AD) 11.50 All Elite Wrestling: Collision. Hard-hitting action from AEW’s newest show, featuring stars including FTR, The House of Black, Thunder Rosa, Mikey and more 1.55am All Elite Wrestling: Rampage 2.50 Unwind with ITV 3.00 Teleshopping

Drama

6.00am Teleshopping 7.10 All Creatures Great and Small 8.00 Doctors 9.20 Classic Holly City Classic Casualty 11.40 The Bill 12.40pm Classic EastEnders 2.00 Pie in the Sky 3.00 Lovejoy 4.15 All Creatures Great and Small 5.20 Birds of a Feather. Sharon starts to feel broody 6.00 Keeping Up Appearances (AD) 6.40 Last of the Summer Wine. The trio encounter a man with an inflatable doll (AD) 7.20 Last of the Summer Wine. Wesley unites his latest creation (AD) 8.00 Dalziel & Pascoe. The detectives search for the killer of a docusoap star whose body is washed ashore, and a host of suspects emerge as the investigation progresses (2/4) (AD) 10.00 New Tricks. Brian and the team investigate the death of a professor who perished after falling off the roof of his college, and learn he was involved in a feud over teaching methods (2/10) (AD) 11.20 Soldier, Soldier. Paddy, Dave and Vinny have a romantic reunion with their wives 12.30am Lovejoy 1.40 When the Boat Comes In 2.50 Classic Holly City (SL) 4.00 Teleshopping

Yesterday

6.10am The Architecture the Railways Built (AD) 7.10 Classic Car Garage (AD) 8.00 Abandoned Engineering (AD) 10.00 Narrow Escapes of World War II (AD) 11.00 War Factories 12.00 Great British Railway Journeys 1.00pm Antiques Roadshow 2.00 Bangers & Cash 4.00 Narrow Escapes of World War II (AD) 5.00 Bangers & Cash. The mass production of ammunition brought on by Samuel Colt 6.00 Great British Railway Journeys 7.00 Antiques Roadshow. From the grounds of Aston Hall in Birmingham 8.00 Simon Reeve’s South America. The adventurer travels to the vast white salt flats of Bolivia, and on to the forested heart of Paraguay 9.00 Bangers & Cash: Restoring Classics. The team fly the flag for King and country purchasing a 1981 Rolls-Royce Silver Spirit (AD) 10.00 Bangers & Cash. A convertible Triumph Herald brings a few smiles on auction day (3/10) 11.00 Abandoned Engineering (12/12) (AD) 12.00 Great British Railway Journeys 1.00am Railway Murders: 2.00 Scouting for Toys (AD) 3.00 Teleshopping

Tetonor Moderate No 467

58	100	57	120
65	20	112	24
29	128	22	96
126	27	110	64

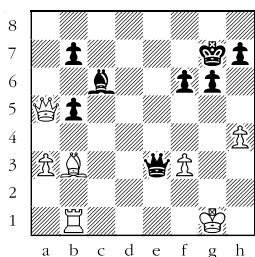
1	2	2		6	8		10			16			55	56	
---	---	---	--	---	---	--	----	--	--	----	--	--	----	----	--

When complete, the strip below the grid can be split into eight pairs of numbers. Adding the numbers in a pair gives one of the 16 numbers in the grid. Multiplying them gives a different number in the grid. For example, a 4 and 6 in the strip could be paired to make 10 ($4+6$) and 24 (4×6) in the grid. Enter each sum below the corresponding number in the grid. The blanks in the strip must be deduced, bearing in mind the numbers are listed in ascending order.

The next Tetonor puzzle will appear on Thursday

**For more puzzles, including
Mini Sudoku, extra Codeword,
Train Tracks and Futoshiki
go to page 10**

Winning Move



White to play.
This position is from
Samaganova-Gabrielian, Titled
Tuesday, chess.com 2024.

Defending is much harder psychologically than attacking is. When faced with powerful threats the defender can often feel as though they are on a tightrope, where any false step leads to immediate doom. Here White has four possible king moves and only one leads to a draw. Can you find it?

Codeword No 5220

10	3	3	11	10	6	22	20		8	7	21	8
26		10		23		24		8		1		10
24	11	22	1	26		7	19	11	12	10	6	25
20		18		20		16		22		23		25
6	7	9	6		3	10	12	2	3	11	1	20
					L	A	D					
		20		11		3		22				16
12	9	16	11	6	17		17	3	7	7	21	2
11				17		8		20		16		
26	9	23	20	16	8	9	17		10	17	7	17
10		7		10		16		4		10		16
14	20	26	25	11	17	20		7	9	6	22	20
7		26		6		10		3		15		20
5	24	20	25		13	9	6	1	2	10	16	12

~~A~~ ~~B~~ ~~C~~ ~~D~~ E F G H I J ~~K~~ L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
		L							A		D	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Every letter in this crossword-style grid is represented by a number from 1 to 26. Each letter of the alphabet appears in the grid at least once. Use the letters already provided to work out the identity of further letters. Enter letters in the main grid and the smaller reference grid until all 26 letters of the alphabet have been accounted for. Proper nouns are excluded. *Yesterday's solution, right*

Cluelines Stuck on Codeword? To receive 4 random clues call 0901 293 6262 or text TIMECODE to 64343. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. Texts cost £1 plus your standard network charge. For the full solution call 0905 757 0142. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke. 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5.30pm).

Lexica Easy No 7423 Hard No 7424

Figure 1 shows two 8x8 grids. The left grid has a 4x4 pattern of black and white squares. The right grid has a 4x4 pattern of black and white squares. The 16x16 grid is formed by interleaving these two patterns.

Slide the letters either horizontally or vertically back into the grid to produce a completed crossword. Letters are allowed to slide over other letters

Train Tracks No 2249

[illegible]

Lay tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of track go in each row and column. There are only straight sections and curved sections. The track cannot cross itself.

Quintagram®

Solve all five **cryptic** clues using each letter underneath once only

- 1 Dark cloud from China crossing lake (4)
- 2 Economies set back firm's decorative work (6)
- 3 Difficult to get shorter undergarment for agricultural work (7)
- 4 Embarrassed when aspiration initially dented (7)
- 5 Obscene, spoiling most of dinner, etc (8)

A	A	A	A	B	C	C	C
D	D	E	E	E	E	H	H
I	L	L	N	N	O	P	R
S	S	S	T	T	T	U	V

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KenKen Medium No 6212

1-	20×			60×	
	2÷		6×		6+
8+		5		14+	
1-		9+			
	9+		5-	3÷	1-

All the digits 1 to 6 must appear in every row and column. In each thick-line "block", the target number in the top left-hand corner is calculated from the digits in all the cells in the block, using the operation indicated by the symbol.

Futoshiki No 4760

5				
			\wedge	\wedge
\vee				
	4	$>$		
		\vee		\vee
		$<$		
				\vee
	$<$			

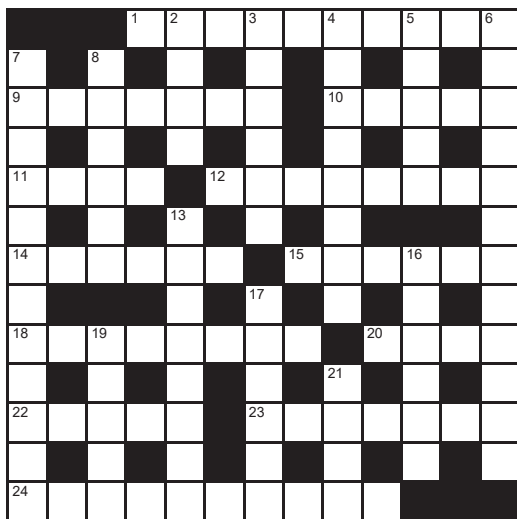
Fill the blank squares so that every row and column contains each of the numbers 1 to 5 once only. The symbols between the squares indicate whether a number is larger (>) or smaller (<) than the number next to it.

Kakuro No 3719

	24	30		8	28	7	4		31	18
16			11					10		
34			16					14		
23				4			10			
7			14			30	7	24		
	19	24	24							
34									30	29
10					3			12		
23				14	23			12		
			3			4	24			
6			38							
16			21					16		

Fill the grid using the numbers 1 to 9 only. The numbers in each horizontal or vertical run of white squares add up to the total in the triangle to its left or above it. The same number may occur more than once in a row or column, but not within the same run of white squares.

times2 Crossword No 9536



Across

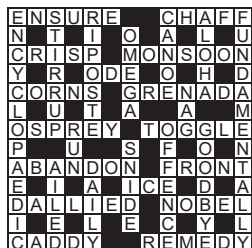
- 1 Thin brittle savoury biscuit (10)
 9 Experiencing one success after another (2,1,4)
 10 US music genre (5)
 11 Mope (4)
 12 Slender dagger (8)
 14 Dropped rubbish (6)

- 15 Disruptive commotion (6)
 18 German dog breed (8)
 20 Place where flour is made (4)
 22 Prepared layer of topsoil (5)
 23 Be vigilant (4,3)
 24 Long-legged crustacean (6,4)

Down

- 2 Space for movement (4)
 3 Soldier's formal gesture (6)
 4 Excessively fond of drinking alcohol (8)
 5 Explode like a volcano (5)
 6 Downhearted, dejected (12)
 7 Reinforces, cements (12)
 8 Vote (6)
 13 I have no idea! (6,2)
 16 Substance harmful to living things (6)
 17 Language of Celtic origin (6)
 19 Curry dish (5)
 21 Type of bean used to make tofu (4)

Solution to Crossword 9535



Need help with today's puzzle? Call 0905 757 0143 to check the answers. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).

Bridge Andrew Robson

Shireen Mohandes showed me this interesting grand slam from a Norway v Manchester friendly team-of-12 match on RealBridge, that excellent online platform. Plan the play in 7 (i) on ♣3 lead (ii) on ♥6 lead.

A trump lead is standard against a grand slam and that is what David Sarabowski of Manchester chose. The Norwegian declarer, Nicolai Heiberg-Evenstad (aged only 15) played low from dummy and beat East's nine with the jack. He ruffed a diamond and ruffed a spade. He then cashed the king-queen of clubs (throwing hearts from dummy), delighted to observe both opponents follow. He could then cash the ace of diamonds (discarding the jack of hearts) and cross to the ace of hearts to enjoy ♠AKQ7. Grand slam made.

The alternative line is to ruff only one spade (and one diamond). This will succeed (when Heiberg-Evenstad goes down) if clubs are 4-1, provided spades are 4-3. However, Heiberg-Evenstad will succeed (when the alternative line fails) if spades are 5-2, provided clubs are 3-2. A 5-2 split (32 per cent) is more likely than a 4-1 split (28 per cent) so I think Heiberg-Evenstad played it perfectly.

How about on an opening heart lead? This inconveniently removes dummy's late entry to the spades. Does it thereby scupper the slam?

No — for now you can pull off a complete cross-ruff. Win the ace of hearts and cash the ace-king-

Dealer: South, Vulnerability: Both

Teams	♠ AKQ753	♥ AJ72	♦ A52	♣ 1086
	♠ J942	♥ K86	♦ Q982	♣ 43
	♠ 43	♥ A76543	♦ KQJ87	♣ 1096

S	W	N	E
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥(1)	Pass
3♠(2)	Pass	3♠(3)	Pass
4♣(4)	Pass	7♣(5)	End

- (1) Fourth Suit Forcing — setting up a game-force and asking for more information.
 (2) Showing the fifth club.
 (3) Going via the fourth suit to repeat spades shows a game-forcing hand with six spades (note, 1♦-1♠-2♣-3♠ is a non-forcing limit bid).
 (4) Having already shown 5♦-5♠, South could have bid 4♦ to show the six diamonds but relative suit quality argues strongly for the chosen 4♣ bid.
 (5) Reads partner for five good clubs.

Contract: 7♣, Opening Lead: ♣3/♥6

queen of spades, shedding a heart and two diamonds from hand. Ruff a heart, cash the ace of diamonds, ruff a diamond, ruff a heart, ruff a diamond and now you have a high cross-ruff. Grand slam made.

What a boon for bridge the internet is. No way would 12 players schlep across the North Sea to play the match face to face.

andrew.robson@thetimes.co.uk

Brain Trainer

EASY	14	x 3	+ 6	50% OF IT	- 5	x 2	+ 18	÷ 2	+ 8	÷ 12	ANSWER
MEDIUM	49	x 3	+ 55	x 3	- 86	80% OF IT	- 78	+ 1/2 OF IT	+ 79	50% OF IT	ANSWER
HARDER	218	x 6	+ 874	+ 1/2 OF IT	x 2	- 698	75% OF IT	- 888	1/2 OF IT	+ 673	ANSWER

Polygon

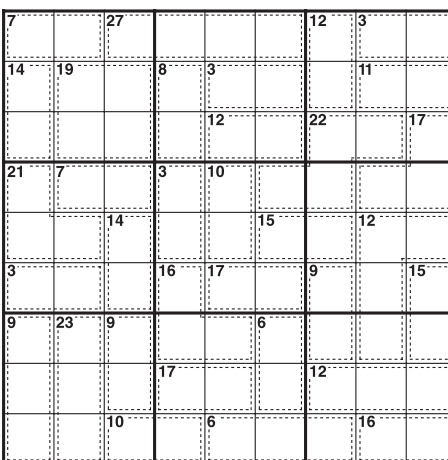


From these letters, make words of **three** or more letters, always including the central letter. Answers must be in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, excluding capitalised words, plurals, conjugated verbs (past tense etc), adverbs ending in LY, comparatives and superlatives. **How you rate** 12 words, average; 16, good; 20, very good; 25, excellent

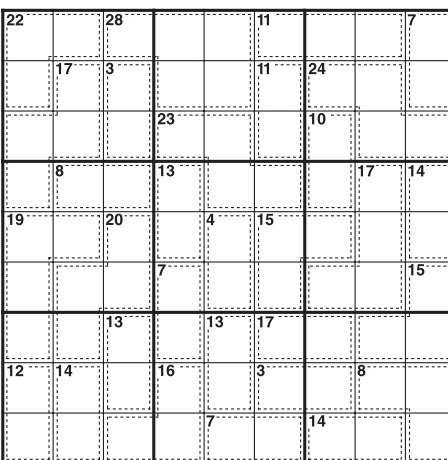
Yesterday's answers

adapt, adapter, adept, dap, dare, dart, data, date, dear, depart, drape, drat, pad, padre, parade, pard, petard, rad, read, readapt, red, tad, ted, trad, trade, tread

Killer Moderate No 9478



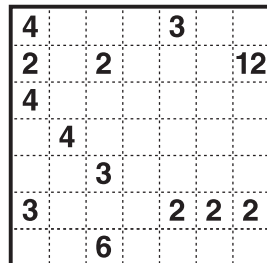
Killer Tough No 9479



As with standard Sudoku, fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Each set of cells joined by dotted lines must add up to the target number in its top-left corner. Within each set of cells joined by dotted lines, a digit cannot be repeated.

Cluelines Stuck on Sudoku, Killer or KenKen? Call 0901 293 6263 before midnight to receive four clues for any of today's puzzles. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).

Cell Blocks No 5103



Divide the grid into square or rectangular blocks, each containing one digit only. Every block must contain the number of cells indicated by the digit inside it.

Set Square No 3722

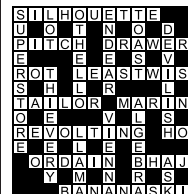
+	5	x	2	=	24
x	+	+			
+	x				= 120
x	+	-			
x	÷				= 12
=	=	=			
189	15	9			

Please note, BODMAS does not apply

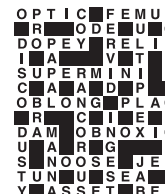
Enter each of the numbers from 1 to 9 in the grid, so that the six sums work. We've placed two numbers to get you started. Each sum should be calculated left to right or top to bottom.

Solutions

Quick Cryptic 2680



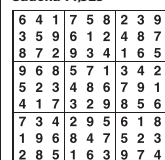
Codeword 5219



Kakuro 3718



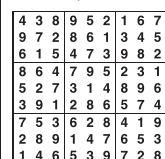
Sudoku 14,925



GK Crossword 234



Sudoku 14,926



Cell Blocks 5102



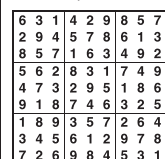
Set Square 3721

5	+	4	x	3	=	
x	+	-				
7	+	8	+ 1			
x	+	÷				
9	-	6	x	2		

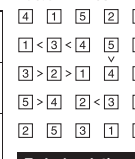
Lexica 7421



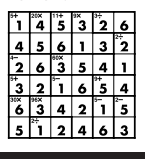
Sudoku 14,927



Futoshiki 4759



KenKen 6211



Lexica 7422



Today's solutions

Concise Quintagram

- 1 Ready
 2 Smoky
 3 Pickled
 4 Vinegar
 5 Cocktail

Cryptic Quintagram

- 1 Pall
 2 Stucco
 3 Harvest
 4 Abashed
 5 Indecent

Suko 4121



Brain Trainer

- Easy 3
 Medium 293
 Harder 2,422

Word watch

Widger (c)

A tool for transplanting seedlings (OED) Melic (c) Intended to be sung (Collins) Saginate (a) To fatten animals (Chambers)

Chess — Winning Move

White blundered with 1 Kh2 when 1 ... Qf2+ 2 Kh3 (2 Kh1 Bxf3 mate) 2 ... Bd7+ forced mate. Correct was 1 Kf1! (1 Kh1 and 1 Kg2 both lose to 1 ... Qx3+ 1 ... Qd3+ 2 Kf2 and although Black can now play 2 ... Qxb1, the counterattack 3 Qc7+ Kh6 4 Qf4+ forces a draw by perpetual check

Quiz

1 A mistake or error and its correction

2 Opium 3 Ego

4 Czechoslovakia, in 1989

5 Noel Coward 6 Matryoshka doll or Russian nested doll

7 George Orwell 8 Breaking the Law 9 Ballpoint pen

10 Gucci 11 The Man Without Qualities 12 Kurosio Kuroshio

or Japan Current 13 Alan Fox 14 Oksana Chusovitina

15 Southampton

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- Seven nights half-board in a four-star hotel

- Explore the magical hamlet and abbey of San Fruttuoso
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- Cruise along the coast to Portofino and visit Santa Margherita
- Enjoy a tasting and lunch at the Cantine Lunae Winery
- Visit Carrara Marble Quarry and museum



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A really enjoyable holiday. Loved all the tours, places we visited were beautiful. Well looked after by our Holiday Director, with great food and well-appointed hotels.

Frances



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Seven nights in a three-star hotel



Seven breakfasts, seven dinners and welcome drink



Services of a Travelsphere Holiday Director



Journey on the Trenet de Cadaques



Wine-tasting in Thuir



Travel on the Yellow Train, Red Train and Rack railway




Figueres and Salvador Dali Museum



Visit to Perelada Castle

Little Trains of the Pyrenees

 Departures | June 2024 to September 2025



Take unforgettable journeys by train through the Pyrenees, starting on the Trenet de Cadaques road train to the dramatic landscapes of Cap de Creus National Park. Head to France to explore the medieval walled city of Thuir. Board the Yellow Train for a journey through the Pyrenees and take electric cog train into the lush green Núria Valley. Hop on the Red Train from Rivesaltes to Axat before making

more discoveries in the delightful town of Figueres, the birthplace of Salvador Dali.



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Scenic Slovenia & Lake Bled

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Seven nights in a four-star hotel



Seven breakfasts, seven dinners and welcome drink



Services of a Travelsphere Holiday Director



Sightseeing tour of Bled and its castle



Pletna boat ride to Bled Island



Guided tour of Slovenia's cosmopolitan capital Ljubljana



Farewell dinner with folklore dancing



Nestled in the heart of Europe, Slovenia is a hidden gem and a must-visit for travellers seeking something unique. Picturesque Bled is your base for this holiday where you'll explore the town, its castle and take a traditional pletna boat to the world-renowned Bled Island. Admire the splendid panorama of the impressive Julian Alps and soak up the atmosphere of Slovenia's capital Ljubljana.

Enjoy a farewell dinner at a local restaurant which includes a folklore performance by local dancers.



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12 DAYS FROM
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per person

Treasures of Turkey

Departures | September 2024 to November 2025



Price includes



Return flights from London and overseas transportation



11 nights in four-star hotels



11 breakfasts, two lunches, ten dinners and welcome drink



Tour of Istanbul including The Blue Mosque, Hagia Sofia, Topkapi Palace and Grand Bazaar



Visit the Temple of Artemis, in Ephesus



Cappadocia and the Goreme Valley with a glass of wine at sunset



Visit Konya, Ankara, Troy and the ancient city of Pergamon



Visit the Gallipoli War Memorial



Pamukkale hot springs and swimming opportunity



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Turkey dazzles your senses, from Istanbul's bustling Grand Bazaar with scents of spices to the incredible cave dwellings of Cappadocia and the shimmering tiles of the Blue Mosque – not to mention the delicious cuisine. This tour takes you far and wide to discover richly historical sites, such as the famous Hagia Sophia, the Topkapi Palace and the legendary city of Troy. Soak up culture and tradition with belly dancing and the heady

scent of Turkish coffee. Travel along the Mediterranean past sparkling lakes and through sweeping valleys.

Uzbekistan - the Heart of the Silk Route

Departures | September 2024 to October 2025

Save up to
£250 per
couple*

11 DAYS FROM
£2,699*
per person



Price includes



Return flights from London and overseas transportation



Nine nights in three-star hotels, plus one night in flight



Nine breakfasts, two lunches, seven dinners and welcome drink



Discover Samarkand, Bukhara and Tashkent



Traditional breadmaking and lunch with a local family



Drive through the Kyzylkum Desert



Visit to a famous ceramics studio



Walking tour of Khiva's Itchan Kala



Explore the home of national hero, Tamerlane



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The incredible history of the Silk Road crosses soaring mountain ranges, endless deserts and ancient cities overflowing with eye-popping architecture. You'll see it all in Uzbekistan. Discover why Samarkand inspires world-famous poets, explore the holy city of Bukhara and see the undulating dunes of the Kyzylkum Desert. Immerse yourself in centuries-old traditions with dining, dance and

meetings with locals. And enjoy plenty of free time for your own exploration of Central Asia's historic marvel.

Save up to
**£400 per
couple***

New England, Canada & New York in The Fall

 Departures | September 2024 to October 2025

This incredible holiday has it all. You'll explore no less than five iconic North American cities, admire the incredible fall colours and see the thundering waters of Niagara Falls.

Beginning in Boston and ending in New York City, this carefully planned itinerary takes you to some of New England's most famous destinations. From the historical town of Plymouth, where the Mayflower pilgrims landed, to Cape Cod and the mountains of Vermont and

New Hampshire, you can take it all in as we journey north to Canada. We'll then discover Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto and Niagara Falls before finishing our trip in New York City.

With just the right balance between organised sightseeing and free time to make it your own adventure, your Holiday Director will always be on hand to ensure you head home with memories that last a lifetime.



Price includes



Return flights from London, overseas transfers, other transportation & portage



12 nights accommodation plus one night in flight



Two breakfasts, one dinner and welcome drink



Services of a Travelsphere Holiday Director



Visit the cities of Boston, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto and New York



Enjoy a cruise on Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire



Drive along the Kancamagus Highway to see the splendid fall foliage



Explore the White Mountains of New Hampshire



Admire breathtaking views of Niagara Falls



Memorable moment

Visit one of the greatest sights in the New World, the incredible Niagara Falls. Comprised of three separate waterfalls, Horseshoe Falls, American Falls and Bridal Veil Falls, choose how you take in the views of these thundering waters.



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Epic Peru

 Departures | October 2024 to October 2025













Follow in the footsteps of intrepid adventurers as you explore Peru. Discover the colonial past of its capital, Lima, journey along the Pan American Highway and cruise around the Ballestas Islands. In the 'White City' of Arequipa uncover archaeological Andean treasures then head to Puno, set on the shores of Lake Titicaca. During a four-night stay in Cuzco, walk amongst ancient Inca sites, none more thrilling than the

'lost city' of Machu Picchu. Perched high above a steep valley and swathed in jungle, this incredible site is the pièce de résistance of your tour.



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Price includes

-  Return flights from London and overseas transportation
-  13 nights in three and four-star hotels plus two nights in flight
-  14 breakfasts, four lunches, one dinner
-  Visit Lima, Arequipa and Cuzco
-  Machu Picchu guided tour
-  Lake Titicaca and the floating islands
-  See the spectacular Colca Canyon
-  The Pachacamac Temple in the valley of Lurin
-  Cruise the Ballestas Islands
-  Cookery class sampling different Peruvian dishes



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Kenya: Safari and Savannah Sunsets

 Departures | September 2024 to October 2024

TEN DAYS FROM
£4,199*
per person










This wonderful holiday takes you to both Samburu and Masai Mara National Reserve, where you'll go in search of wildlife, including the 'Big Five'. The reserves are also home to an enthralling array of animals including giraffe and hippo, as well as a large population of Nile crocodile. You'll also stay at Lake Naivasha, where the grounds of your overnight hotel are

visited by many species of wildlife. And an overnight stay in Kenya's capital Nairobi rounds off this fabulous adventure.



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Price includes

-  Return flights from London and overseas transportation
-  Eight nights in great quality lodges, hotels and luxury tented camps, plus one night in flight
-  Eight breakfasts, seven lunches, eight dinners and welcome drink
-  Six game drives in six-seater 4x4 safari vehicles in Samburu National Reserve and Masai Mara Game Reserve
-  Stay in luxury tented camps in Samburu and Masai Mara
-  Journey through the Great Rift Valley
-  View bird life from the water on a boat trip on Lake Naivasha



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Japan - Land of the Rising Sun

 Departures | October 2024 to November 2025

There are few places on Earth where the contrast between traditional and modern is quite so marked as in Japan and on this 13-day holiday you'll discover many of its incredible highlights.

Begin in Tokyo, where on a guided tour you'll walk through a man-made forest to visit the Meiji Jingu Shrine, explore the bustling district of Asakusa and head up the Tokyo Tower for spectacular views. You'll leave the city behind you on a day trip to Mount Fuji, and it's not long before you catch your first glimpse of the snow-capped peak. You'll take a cruise across Lake Ashi, where on a clear day you'll enjoy more views of Mount Fuji, and take a cable car to the hot springs.

Enroute to the traditional mountain city of Takayama, you'll stop at the beautiful Matsumoto Castle and a wasabi farm - why not try a scoop of wasabi ice cream. You'll head out to the morning market in Takayama, explore the old town and venture to Shirakawago, a Unesco World Heritage Site.

You'll take your first Shinkansen (bullet train) to Kyoto where you'll spend three nights. Enjoy a rickshaw ride through a bamboo forest, have a go at making sushi and visit the Kinkakuji temple and Nijo

Castle. Your tour continues to Hiroshima where you'll see the Atomic Bomb Dome and have time to visit the museum and Miyajima island to visit the Itsukushima shrine and see its iconic floating torii gate. Your journey ends in bustling Osaka, where you'll visit floating garden observatory, Osaka Castle and have some free time for some last minute shopping if you wish.



Price includes



Return flights from London, overseas transfers, other transportation & portage



Ten nights in three & four-star hotels plus two nights in flight



Ten breakfasts, one lunch, three dinners and welcome drink



Services of a Travelsphere Holiday Director



Visit the cities of Tokyo, Takayama, Kyoto, Nara and Osaka



Hakone, gateway to Mount Fuji and cruise on Lake Ashi



Matsumoto Castle, Japan's oldest existing castle



Arashiyama and rickshaw ride through a bamboo forest



Hiroshima sightseeing tour and Miyajima Island



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Had an excellent holiday. Saw a lot of Japan and its culture. Travel facilities in Japan excellently arranged and managed by the Holiday Director and the local guides. We were lucky to have excellent weather and Mount Fuji views, as a result, were brilliant.

Narinder

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